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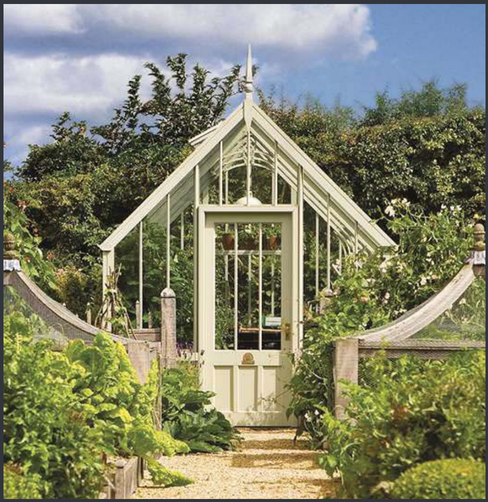

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# EDITOR'S LETTER

I'm delighted that in this issue of *Garden Illustrated* multi award-winning designer Sarah Price has written about her 100 favourite plants. Best known for her critically acclaimed and intensely beautiful planting at the Olympic Park in Stratford, east London, Sarah's plant selections make many a heart – including mine – skip a beat. Her carefully edited list is both inspirational and practical, and includes annuals, bulbs, climbers, grasses, perennials, British wildflowers, shrubs and trees. From simple and resilient plants, to those that transition the seasons well, repeat flowerers, self-seeders and plants that are easy and lovely in equal measure, you'll want a notebook and pencil to hand. The list includes some well-known favourites; think the chequered plum and white bells of *Fritillaria melagris*, as well as lesser-known cultivars of familiar plants, such as *Dierama pulcherrimum* 'Blackbird'. It's noted for its smaller than typical form and more deeply blackcurrant-toned flowers. Sarah returns as a designer to the RHS Chelsea Flower Show this year with a garden that will demonstrate how simple, sustainable materials – earth, water and plants – are enough to create a richly atmospheric and unforgettable space.

In the second of her travelogue series, horticulturist Hannah Gardner describes how in Japan, where the blooming of a popular wildflower can demand a news bulletin, she picked up the habit of celebrating a species at its zenith. This month she visits Scotland in search of snowdrops. There can be few plants that evoke such obsession in gardeners. For many across the UK, snowdrops herald the start of the gardening year. Coosheen is a small, suburban garden on the edge of Cork city that has swiftly become a Mecca for snowdrop fans. Confirmed galanthophile Hester Forde grows a notable collection there with an emphasis on the Irish cultivars. Hester notes *Galanthus* 'Cicely Hall', a robust cultivar with dark-green inner markings, as the plant that inspired her collection. It remains among her favourites and she shares her tips for sourcing snowdrop bulbs and growing them with us.

If you like to tuck a smartphone in your pocket outside, we have a round-up of the best new horticultural podcasts to download. The latest gardening listening is less how to prune roses or when to sow seed potatoes and more horticulture as cultural literacy and houseplant sowalongs.

I hope you enjoy the issue,

Lucy Bellamy

LUCY BELLAMY, EDITOR

JASON INGRAM

Award-winning designer Sarah Price chooses her 100 favourite plants, page 37

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JASON INGRAM

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## Subscribe & save

take out a digital subscription to *Gardens Illustrated*

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## *COVER IMAGE*

*Gladiolus* 'Ruby', from 100 plants feature, by Clive Nichols / GAP Photos

## *EVENTS AND OFFERS*

- Enjoy a behind-the-scenes look at what goes into creating a Chelsea garden on our reader day to growers Hortus Loci – page 9
- Join us on a tour of the finest lakeside gardens around Lakes Como and Maggiore, including a visit to the Orticolario garden show – page 10
- Save money when you subscribe to the digital edition, see page 32
- Save 15 per cent on plants, bulbs and seed from Crocus[†] – page 111

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[†] Reader offer open to mainland UK residents only.

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# CONTRIBUTORS

**FLEUR VAN ZONNEVELD**
Fleur begins a new series of plantman's favourites on page 24. *"I have so many favourites that choosing only ten plants each month is truly a challenge."*

**JAMES ALEXANDER-SINCLAIR**
James shares his ideas for hedges on page 96. *"A beautifully clipped hedge is like a well-cut suit – subtle, understated but effortlessly elegant."*

**ANNIE GATTI**
Annie compiles our monthly design news on page 93. *"Garden designers get ideas from such a wide range of places, objects, materials and images. I love the process of selection each month."*

## *CONTRIBUTING EDITORS*

**JAMES BASSON**
James lives in the South of France where he runs Scape Design with his wife Helen and is a passionate advocate for dry gardens and for creating sustainable landscapes. The winner of four Chelsea Gold medals, he was awarded Best in Show in 2017.

**FERGUS GARRETT**
Fergus was appointed head gardener at Great Dixter by Christopher Lloyd in 1993. He is passionate about passing on his knowledge through student and volunteer programmes at Dixter and through worldwide lectures. He was awarded an RHS Associate of Honour in 2008.

**ANNA PAVORD**
Anna's books include her bestseller *The Tulip* and most recently *Landskipping*. For 30 years she was *The Independent*'s gardening correspondent. In 2000 the RHS awarded her the Veitch Memorial Medal. She lives and gardens in Dorset.

**DAN PEARSON**
Dan is one of the UK's best-known garden designers familiar to many through his gardening columns in the *Observer* magazine. Eight of his gardens, including the Tokachi Millennium Forest in Japan, have won awards and he was awarded Best in Show at Chelsea in 2015.

**SARAH PRICE**
Sarah is one of the UK's most sought-after garden designers who won worldwide recognition for her designs for the 2012 London Olympic Park. She won Gold at Chelsea in 2012 and was named 2016 Garden Columnist of the year by the GMG for her design series in *Gardens Illustrated*.

# GARDENS
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## *HOW TO GET IN TOUCH WITH US*

### SUBSCRIPTION ENQUIRIES AND BACK ISSUES

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buysubscriptions.com/gardensillustrated
USA/CANADA GILcustserv@cdsfulfillment.com, britsubs.com/garden
UK/REST OF THE WORLD *Gardens Illustrated*, PO Box 3320
3 Queensbridge, Northampton NN4 7BF.
USA/CANADA *Gardens Illustrated*, PO BOX 37495, Boone, IA 50037-0495 USA.

### ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES

+44 (0)117 314 8817 heather.golden@immediate.co.uk

### EDITORIAL ENQUIRIES

+44 (0)117 314 7440 gardens@gardensillustrated.com
*Gardens Illustrated*, Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited,
2nd Floor, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN.

### SYNDICATION & LICENSING

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+44 (0)117 314 8782 emma.brunt@immediate.co.uk

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## *MAGAZINE CONTACTS*

| | |
|---|---|
| **EDITORIAL** | |
| Editor | Lucy Bellamy |
| Contributing editors | James Basson, Fergus Garrett, Anna Pavord, Dan Pearson, Sarah Price |
| Deputy editor | Sorrel Everton |
| Art director | David Grenham |
| Deputy art editor | Niki Goss |
| Production editor | Juliet Giles |
| Designer | Liam McAuley |
| Staff writer | Alys Hurn |
| Botanical adviser | Dr James Compton |
| Thanks this issue | Hilary Brown, Jenny Price |
| **ADVERTISING** | |
| Advertising manager | Heather Golden 0117 314 8817 heather.golden@immediate.co.uk |
| Senior brand sales executive | Sophie North 0117 933 8051 sophie.north@immediate.co.uk |
| Brand sales executive | Olivia Charlesworth 0117 314 8361 olivia.charlesworth@immediate.co.uk |
| Brand sales executive | Phil Wallington 0117 314 7401 phil.wallington@immediate.co.uk |
| Classified sales executive | Rachael Kelly 0117 300 8548 rachael.kelly@immediate.co.uk |
| USA advertising representative | Kate Buckley buckley@buckleypell.com |
| Advertising designer | Parvin Sepehr |
| **INSERTS** | |
| Laurence Robertson | +353 (0)876 902208 |
| **CIRCULATION, MARKETING, PRESS & PR** | |
| Newstrade manager | Rob Brock |
| Subscriptions director | Jacky Perales-Morris |
| Direct marketing manager | Aimee Rhymer |
| Press officer | Dom Lobley dominic.lobley@immediate.co.uk |
| **MANAGEMENT** | |
| Chief executive officer | Tom Bureau |
| Managing director, Bristol | Andy Marshall |
| Publisher | Marie Davies |
| Promotions and partnerships manager, specialist | Rosa Sherwood |
| **SYNDICATION & LICENSING** | |
| Director of licensing and syndication | Tim Hudson |
| **PRODUCTION** | |
| Production director | Sarah Powell |
| Production managers | Rose Griffiths, Louisa Molter |

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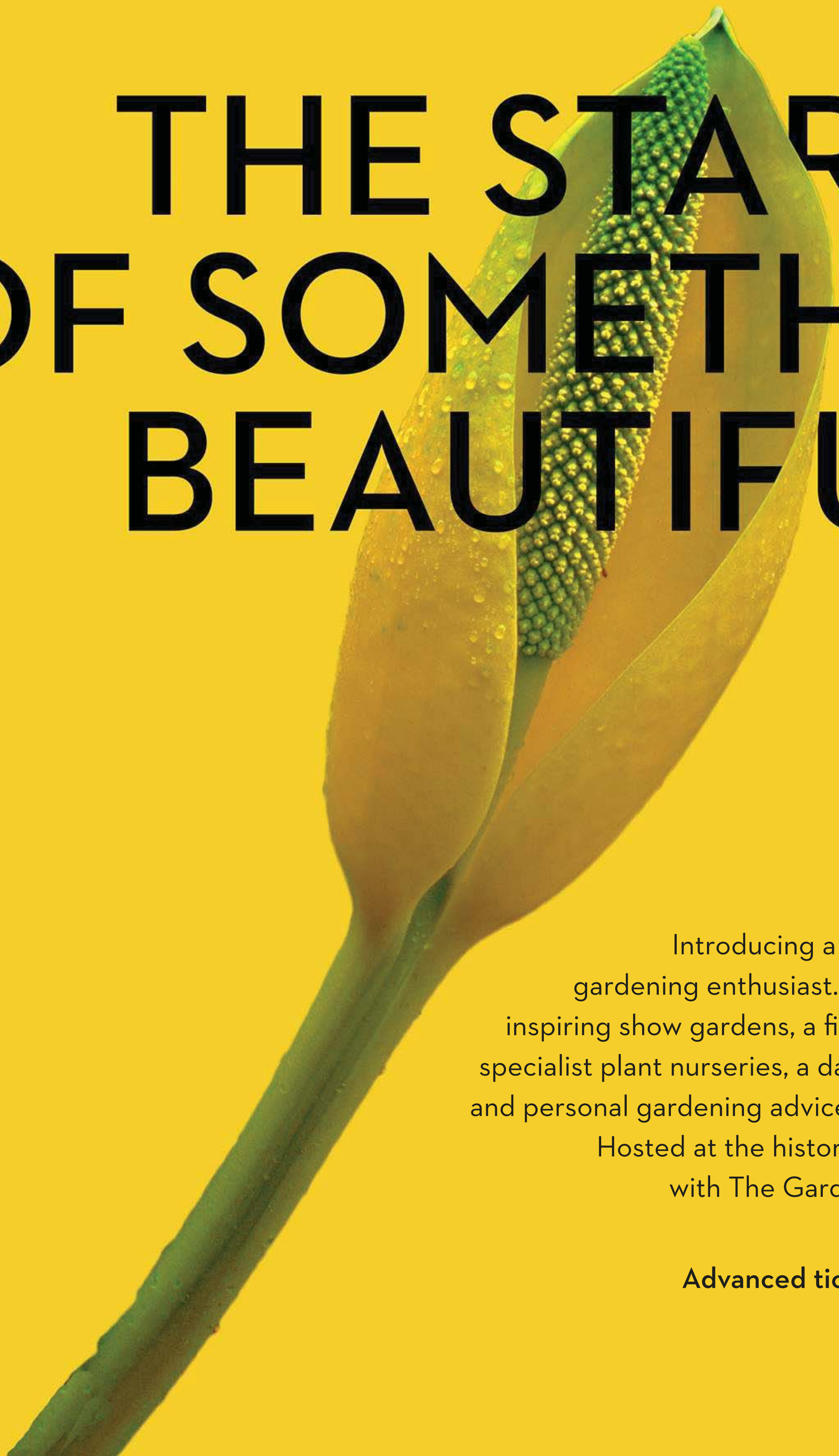

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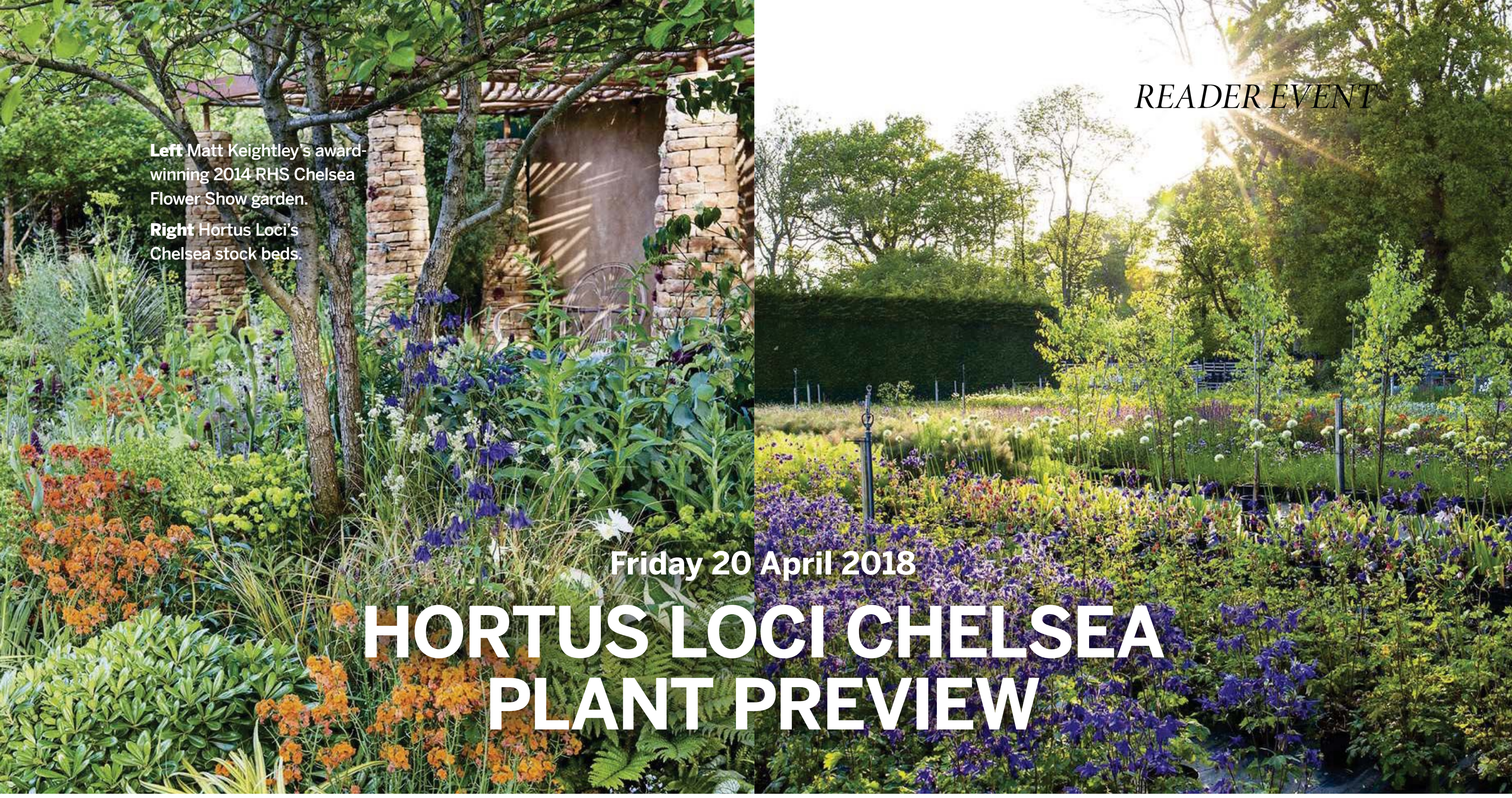

**Left** Matt Keightley's award-winning 2014 RHS Chelsea Flower Show garden.

**Right** Hortus Loci's Chelsea stock beds.

### Friday 20 April 2018

# HORTUS LOCI CHELSEA PLANT PREVIEW

*Join us for a behind-the-scenes preview of the plants destined for Chelsea's top show gardens, with a private tour of growers Hortus Loci and a talk from award-winning designer Matt Keightley*

## THE SPEAKERS

**Matt Keightley** is an award-winning garden designer whose Chelsea show gardens have twice won the coveted BBC/RHS People's Choice Award in 2014 and 2015.

**Mark Straver** comes from a long line of nurserymen. He set up Hortus Loci in 2011 and is known for his expertise in sourcing a wide range of plants from around the world.

**Michael Buck** is responsible for co-ordinating the growing of all the plants on the nursery site and for selecting plants destined for Chelsea show gardens.

The RHS Chelsea Flower Show showcases not just the best garden designs and designers but also the best plants, and nursery Hortus Loci is a key grower for the show gardens. Working in close partnership with designers, the growing and sourcing of plants begins as much as a year before the show, reaching a frenzy of logistics once the garden builds begin in early May. Our Reader Day will give you a behind-the-scenes preview of the plants being grown for the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2018, just before they head off for the showground. You'll get a sneak peek at what's likely to be this year's must-have plant, as well as an insight into the planning and growing process. Nurserymen Mark Straver and Michael Buck will talk about how they grow the plants needed, and two-time Chelsea award winner Matt Keightley, who this year will be designing the RHS Feel Good Garden at the show, will talk about the process involved in selecting plants for this and his previous gardens.

## EVENT DETAILS

**Date** Friday 20 April 2018.

**Venue** The Plant Centre, Hortus Loci, Hound Green, Hook, Hampshire RG27 8LQ.

## PROGRAMME

**10am** Arrival, coffee and cakes.

**10.30am** Guided tour of the Chelsea plants and the nursery with accompanying talk.

**12 noon** Lunch provided by on-site Hobo.co artisan café and kitchen.

**1.30pm** Talk by Matt Keightley on show garden planting.

For the rest of the afternoon you are free to explore the nursery, and buy plants with your special Reader Day 20% discount.

## TICKETS

**Tickets cost £85** per person, including lunch and refreshments and a 20% discount off plant purchases on the day. You can also sign up on the day for a loyalty card entitling you to a 10% discount whenever you make a purchase at The Plant Centre Hortus Loci.

**Tickets and directions** will be sent out prior to the event. Booking essential. Please advise us if you have any dietary or accessibility requirements.

## TO BOOK

Online gardensillustrated.com/events or call UK 0871 230 7156[†]

[†] Calls to this number from a BT landline will cost 13p per minute plus network extras. Calls from mobiles and other providers may vary. Overseas readers should call +44 115 896 0368.

*Gardens Illustrated* reserves the right to change any element of any event due to circumstances beyond its reasonable control.

ANDREA JONES / GAP PHOTOS , DESIGNED BY MATT KEIGHTLEY – SPONSORED BY THE DAVID BROWNLOW CHARITABLE FOUNDATION; LYNN KEDDIE

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Villa Carlotta.

## 1-5 OCTOBER 2018

# *GARDENS OF THE ITALIAN LAKES*

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## BOOKING DETAILS

**The price per person, based on two people sharing is £2,999 (a single supplement of £400 is levied by the hotels).**

Price includes: two nights dinner, bed and breakfast at *Grand Hotel Des Iles Borromees*, Lake Maggiore and two nights dinner, bed and breakfast at *Hotel Villa Flori*, Lake Como; four evening meals with wines; plus two lunches and return flights London to Milan. The price does not include extras at either hotel, or travel insurance.

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# DIG IN

*What's happening, where to go, what's in flower and what to buy this month*

## *SEEING THE WHITE*

Woodlands carpeted in white can mean only one thing: snowdrop season is here and the chance to explore some of the gardens opening for the National Garden Scheme Snowdrop Festival 2018. More than 100 gardens, including Welford Park in Berkshire (pictured), will open this year, some with as many as 300 named snowdrop cultivars, as well as other early spring flowers. The entrance fee to the snowdrop gardens will contribute to the many charities supported by the NGS, including Marie Curie and Hospice UK. Find full details at **ngs.org.uk/snowdrops**

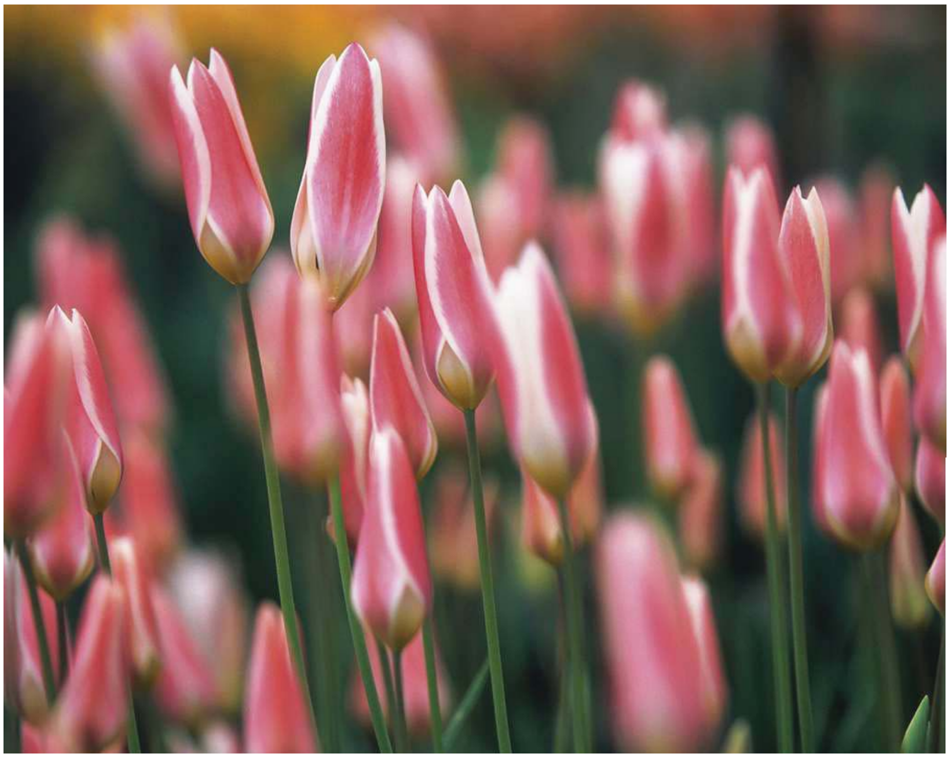
CLIVE NICHOLS

# News

COMPILED BY ALYS HURN

## TALL STORY

Scientists at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, have helped identify a new species of tree, *Dinizia jueirana-facao*. Originally thought to belong to the genus *Parkia*, the tree grows to 40m (the size of a 12-storey building) and is found in just a small area of Brazilian rain forest. It is critically endangered with only 25 known trees. **kew.org**



## CRACKING THE CODE

Leading plant breeder Dümmen Orange has been working with genomic experts Generade and DNA laboratory BaseClear to improve tulip breeding by unlocking the plant's genetic code. The Dutch consortium has succeeded in sequencing the genome of the common garden tulip *Tulipa gesneriana*, which, at around 34 giga base pairs, is the largest sequenced to date and is almost 11 times bigger than that of humans. According to Dümmen Orange's director of research and development, Hans van den Heuvel: "The entire human genome fits into one tulip chromosome." By identifying tiny differences in DNA patterns breeders will be able to develop cultivars that are resistant to common diseases faster and in a more targeted way. **dummenorange.com**

## SULTRY SUMMER

*If summer seems a long way off, choosing new plants for your borders will help beat winter blues. One to try is this new* Hydrangea macrophylla *'Black Diamonds Shining Angel Blue' from Thompson & Morgan. It produces masses of colour-changing, shapely blooms on dark, almost-black stems from June to November. Perfect for borders and containers, it costs £14.99 for a 10.5cm potted plant. thompson-morgan.com*

TULIPS: IMAGEBROKER / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Show Your Garden Some Love

As the days begin to grow longer, February is the best time of year to fall in love with your garden all over again. Rediscover those hidden corners and make way for new blooms and fresh discoveries this spring.

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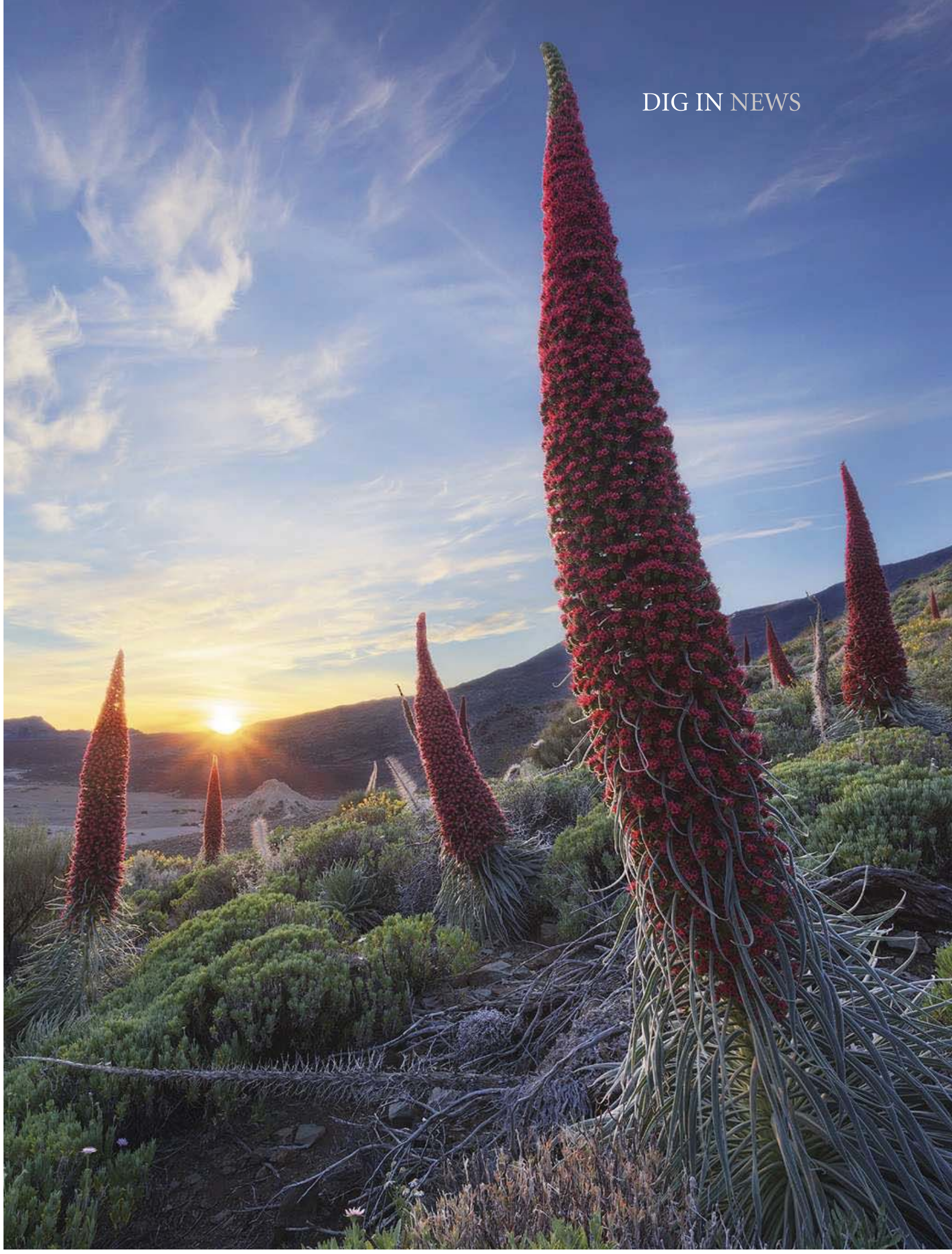

## HOUSEKEEPING

*Birds are always a delight in the garden but they can need a helping hand, and this month the British Trust for Ornithology is launching its annual National Nest Box Week (14-21 February) to help us help them. If you register for a NNBW pack you'll receive advice on how to choose or build a nest box, where to site it (ideally 1-5m above ground level and away from bird feeders as too much activity from visiting birds could disturb nesting pairs) and the best size of hole (25mm is ideal for blue tits; 45mm for starlings – see below), along with other useful tips to encourage birds. To register go to* **bto.org**

PAVLO HERHELIZHIU / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; SENÉN MEDINA FERNÁNDEZ

## NEW PHOTOGRAPHIC AWARD

Entries for this year's International Garden Photographer of the Year competition open on 20 February, with a new award aimed at raising awareness of endangered plant species. The Threatened Plants Photographic Award, which is offered in partnership with Botanic Gardens Conservation International, is open to both amateur and professional photographers who enter images of rare and threatened plant species – such as these striking *Echium wildpretii* by Senén Medina Fernández – in the Beauty of Plants category. **igpoty.com**

## 3 FOR THE GARDEN

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# DIARY

COMPILED BY ALYS HURN AND ANNIE GATTI

**❶ Art for the Environment**
This new Bow Arts exhibition features work from six artists who have undertaken international residencies to explore different ways nature has been transformed by human interference. 26 January – 18 March, 10am-5pm (closed Mondays). Nunnery Gallery, Bow Arts, 181 Bow Road, London E3 2SJ. Tel 020 8960 7774, bowarts.org

**❷ Seedy Sunday**
Britain's largest community seed swap returns with experts ready to offer advice on saving seeds and a seed swap area full of a huge variety of seeds to choose from. 4 February, 10.30am-4pm. £3. Brighton and Hove Sixth Form College, 205 Dyke Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 6EG. seedysunday.org

**❸ Style Your Home for Spring**
Learn how to decorate your table with spring bulbs and plants on a one-day course at Highgrove Gardens with florist Shane Connolly. Shane will also show you how to make best use of spring blossom and create seasonal colour combinations for floral displays. The day also includes a two-course lunch and a guided tour of the gardens. 14 February, 10am-3.45pm. £75. Tel 0333 222 4555, highgrovegardens.com

**❹ All About Roses**
This practical, hands-on workshop will provide you with the basic skills for choosing, planting, maintaining and pruning roses in your garden. A homemade lunch is included. 17 February, 9.30am-2.30pm. £55. Godinton House, Godinton Lane, Ashford, Kent TN23 2BP. Tel 01233 643854, godintonhouse.co.uk

**❺ A Year in the Garden**
Easton Walled Garden is hosting its first Botanical Art Exhibition to coincide with its Snowdrop Week (17-25 February), featuring work from artists Norma Gregory, Dawn Wright and Sue Vize. 17 February – 11 March, 11am-4pm. Entry included with garden admission fee of £7.50. Easton Walled Gardens, Easton, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG33 5AP. Tel 01476 530063, visiteaston.co.uk

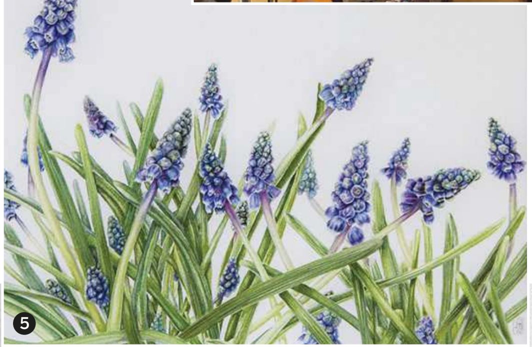
**❻ Architecture Drawing Prize**
See the winning and shortlisted entries from 166 entries in the inaugural Architecture Drawing Prize at Sir John Soane's Museum. 21 February – 14 April. Free. Sir John Soane's Museum, 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3BP. soane.org

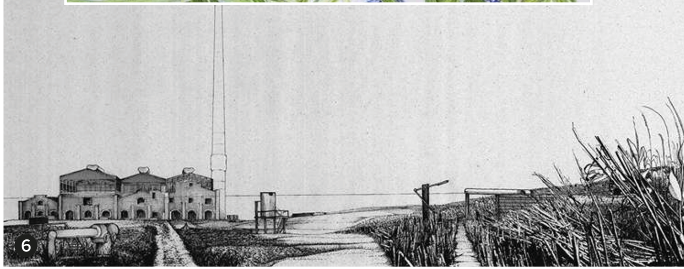
**❼ Designing with Plants**
A short introduction to planting design covering plant selection and combining plants for impact as well as problem solving. Ideal for those starting a new garden or planning to refresh an established space. 23-24 February, 11am-1.30pm. £32. RHS Hyde Hall, Creephedge Lane, Rettendon Common, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 8ET. Tel 020 3176 5830, rhs.org.uk/gardens/hyde-hall

**❽ Camellia Show**
Admire the collection of 33 different types of rare and historic Camellias on display in the Grade I-listed conservatory. 22 February – 25 March, 10am-4pm. Chiswick House and Gardens, Burlington Lane, Chiswick, London W4 2RP. Tel 020 3141 3350, chiswickhouseandgardens.org.uk

**❾ Garden Design Drawing Skills**
Book ahead for a one-day course at RHS Wisley on Garden Design Drawing Skills, led by Andrew Wilson, which looks at techniques for the speedy delivery of drawings and visuals. 1 and 15 March, 10.30am-4pm. £113. RHS Garden Wisley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6QB. Tel 020 3176 5830, rhs.org.uk

**❿ Gardening for a Naturalistic Effect**
Discover the practicalities of creating a natural garden on this one-day course led by Keith Wiley at West Dean College. Keith, the owner of Wildside Nursery in Devon and former head gardener at The Garden House, will look at the design process and research needed with advice on putting your ideas into practice and how to develop and maintain your garden. 3 March, 9.30am-3pm. £75. The Edward James Foundation, West Dean, nr Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0QZ. Tel 01243 811301, westdean.org.uk





8 CLIVE NICHOLS; 10 RICHARD BLOOM

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*Our new holiday to Cornwall brings together a visit to the new Tate Gallery in St Ives, with a private visit to an important Georgian country house and estate, and an opportunity to relax in one of England's finest hotels, The Tresanton, overlooking the sea in the pretty village of St Mawes.*

The Tate, St Ives re-opened in October 2017 after a four year closure, during which the gallery doubled in size. A new permanent collection is now on display, which was previously kept in storage, and this includes works by leading British and international artists, many of whom had very close links with Cornwall. We will also visit the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden and Porthmeor Studio Centre. A highlight of our holiday will be a private visit to Boconnoc near Lostwithiel. We will see the house and the surrounding outbuildings, including its Georgian bath house and church, and also enjoy a lunch here.

*Price from £997 per person (single supp. £358) for three nights including accommodation with breakfast and dinner, all sightseeing, entrance fees and gratuities and the services of the Kirker Tour Leader.*

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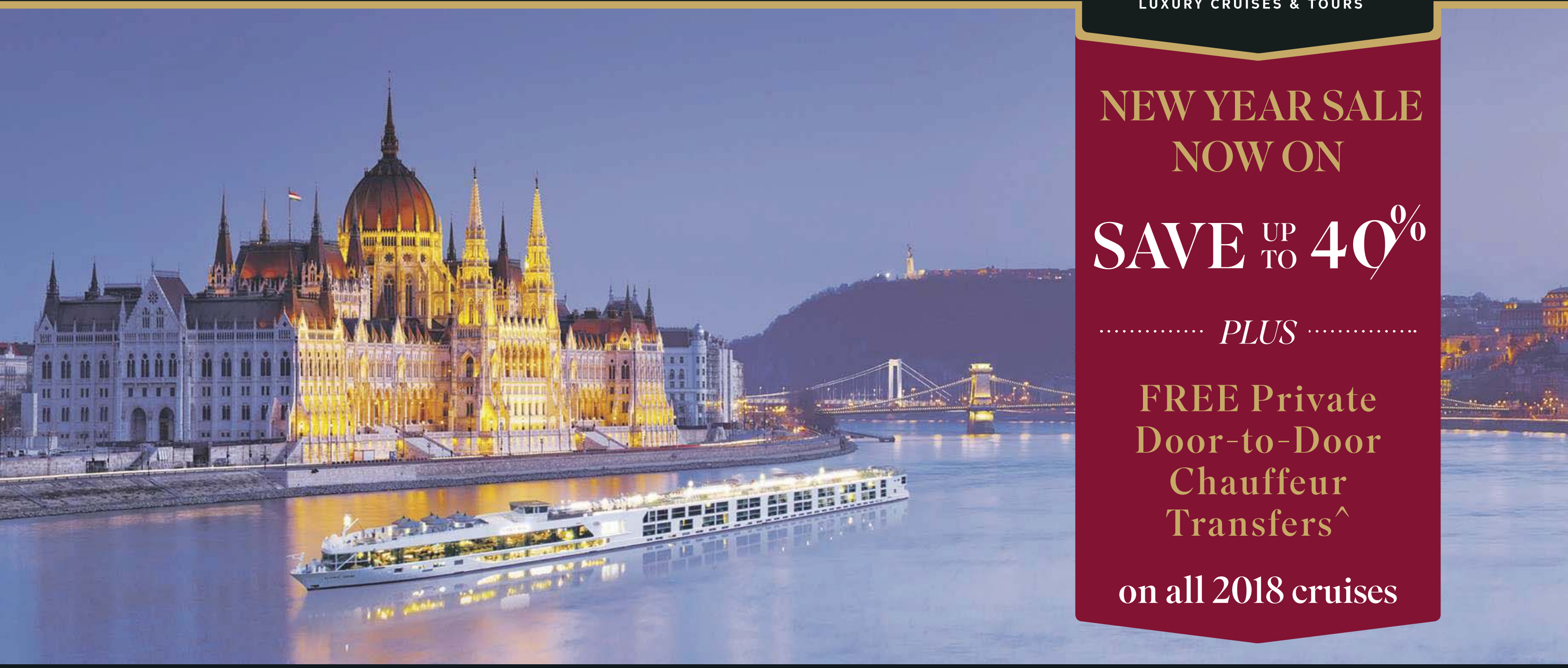

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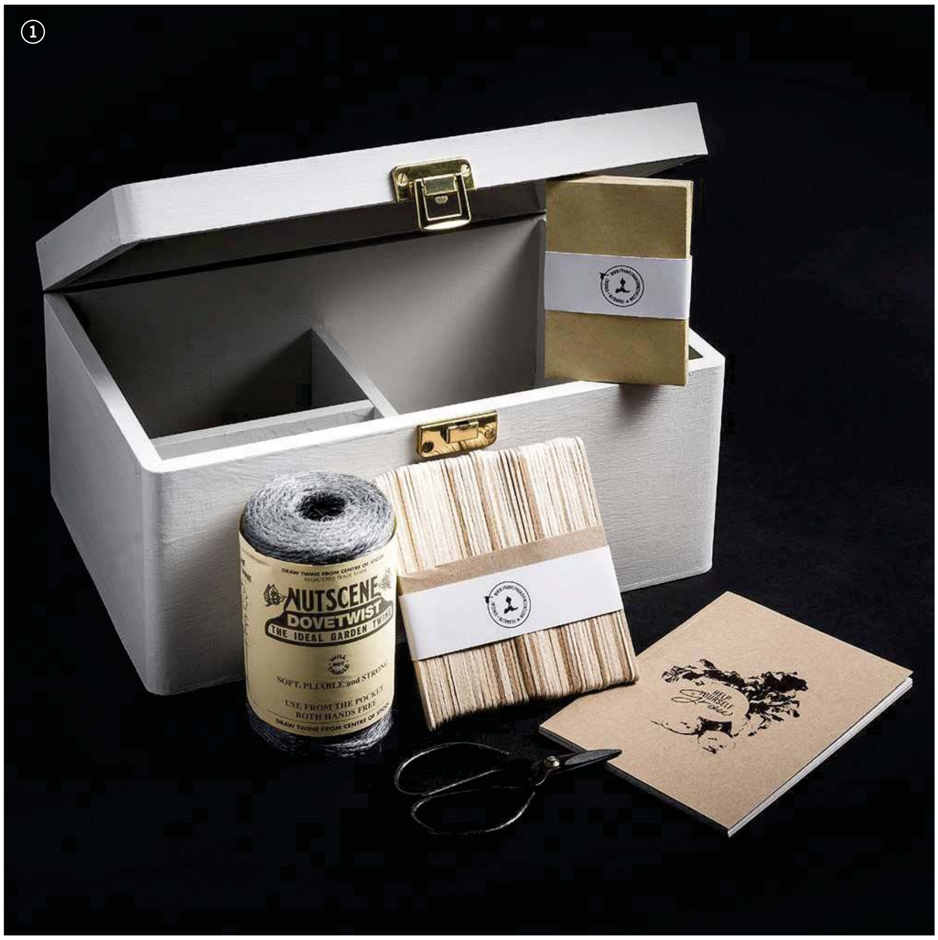
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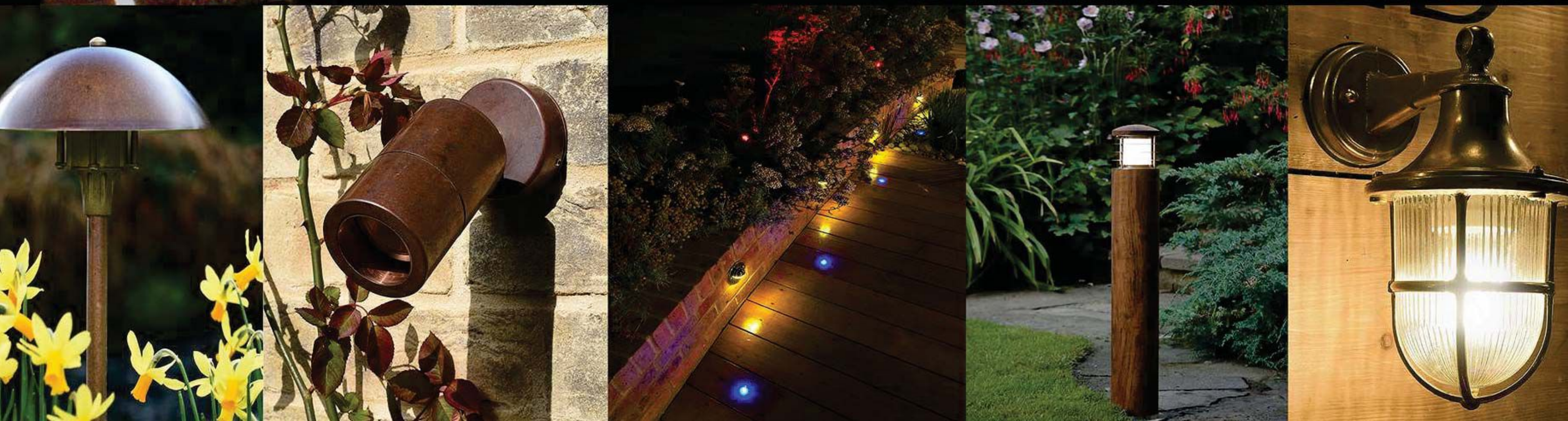
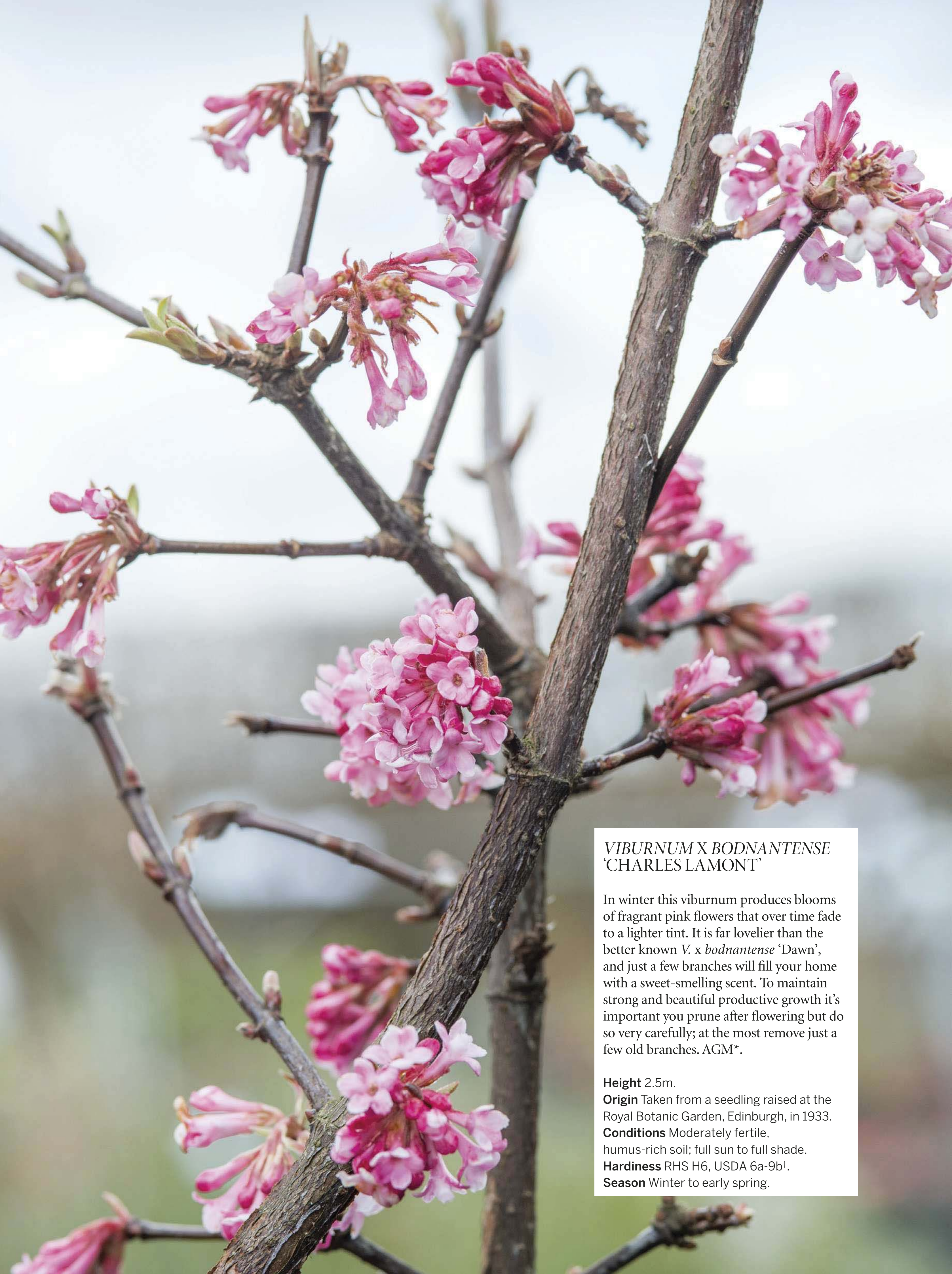




## *VIBURNUM X BODNANTENSE* 'CHARLES LAMONT'

In winter this viburnum produces blooms of fragrant pink flowers that over time fade to a lighter tint. It is far lovelier than the better known *V.* x *bodnantense* 'Dawn', and just a few branches will fill your home with a sweet-smelling scent. To maintain strong and beautiful productive growth it's important you prune after flowering but do so very carefully; at the most remove just a few old branches. AGM*.

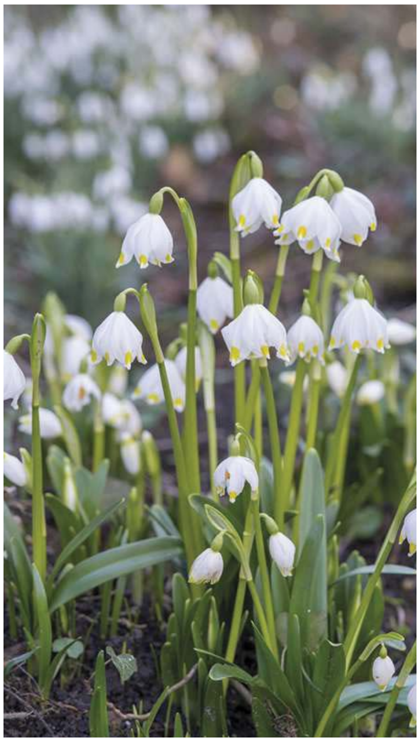
**Height** 2.5m.
**Origin** Taken from a seedling raised at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, in 1933.
**Conditions** Moderately fertile, humus-rich soil; full sun to full shade.
**Hardiness** RHS H6, USDA 6a-9b†.
**Season** Winter to early spring.

# FEBRUARY PLANTS

*In the first of a new series, nurserywoman Fleur van Zonneveld selects her favourite February plants, from fragrant blooms to delicate harbingers of spring*

WORDS FLEUR VAN ZONNEVELD PHOTOGRAPHS MAAYKE DE RIDDER

**Fleur van Zonneveld**
runs the Dutch nursery
De Kleine Plantage.
**dekleineplantage.nl**



## *LEUCOJUM VERNUM*

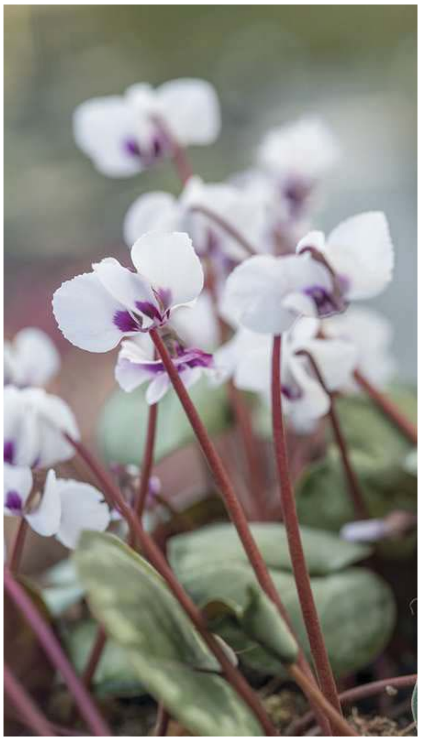
For the past few years a virulent snowdrop epidemic has been sweeping the Netherlands. It takes the form of countless snowdrop days, snowdrop markets, snowdrop galas, snowdrop books – even snowdrop cakes. We've remained largely immune – mainly because we prefer *Leucojum vernum* to any *Galanthus*. They are larger and more striking with green dots on the petals, and always arrive sooner than you expect. The flowers are a somewhat frivolous creamy-white and crinoline-like. They form carpets under trees and are happy to be planted in the green directly after flowering. AGM.

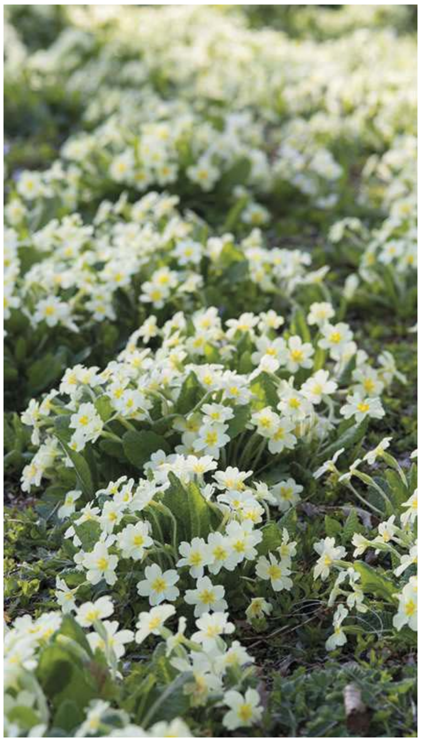
**Height** 30cm.
**Origin** Central and eastern Europe.
**Conditions** Moist but well-drained soil; part shade to full sun.
**Hardiness** RHS H5, USDA 4a-8b.
**Season** Spring.

## *CYCLAMEN COUM* F. *PALLIDUM* 'ALBUM'

Weather permitting, this cyclamen can bloom in January or even earlier. What's lovely is that it is so variable. The heart-shaped, glossy leaves are often attractively mottled and, occasionally, marbled with silver. The flowers are reminiscent of little butterflies, and since we love having butterflies in the garden, *Cyclamen coum* is a good substitute in cold weather. A perfect tuberous perennial for naturalising between shrubs and trees. It easily self-seeds. AGM.

**Height** 10cm.
**Origin** Caucasus.
**Conditions** Well-drained, humus-rich soil; part shade.
**Hardiness** RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.
**Season** Early spring.





## *PRIMULA VULGARIS*

One of our favourite plants for early spring is the pale-yellow *Primula vulgaris*. It flowers exuberantly, directly from the leaf axils on short individual stems and will self-seed widely (the seeds are also scattered by ants). Combine it with *Primula elatior* and *Primula veris*, especially interesting cultivars such as 'Sunset Shades', and you will be rewarded with an overwhelming flood of yellow, sometimes with a reddish orange or green touch that sings of spring. The blue accent of *Scilla bifolia* in between makes the show complete. AGM.

**Height** 10cm.
**Origin** Western and southern Europe.
**Conditions** Moist but well-drained soil; part shade to full sun.
**Hardiness** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.
**Season** Early spring.

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*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.

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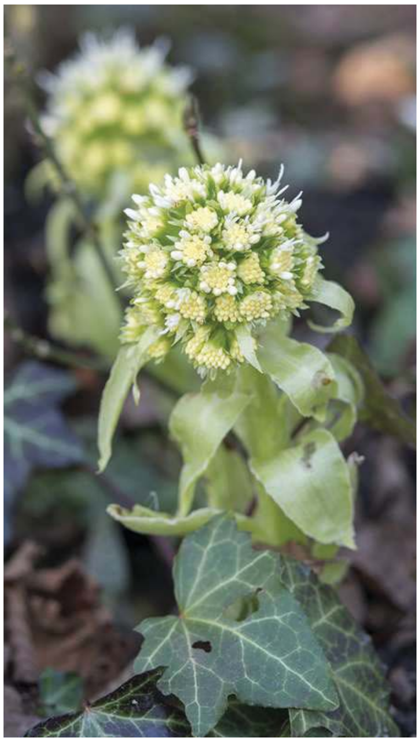


## *PETASITES ALBUS*

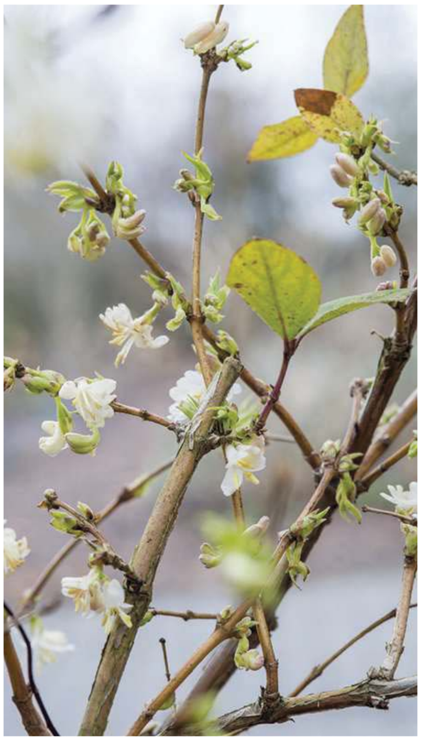
The semi-circular dense clusters of this butterbar's yellowish white flowers always remind me of a group of imps standing in a row. Its leaves appear after flowering, and the small fleshy petioles (flower stems) are edible, along with the flower buds, which are delicious when fried. It is a good companion for *Leucojum vernum* and *Primula vulgaris*. Unlike other *Petasites* species, such as *P. japonicus* var. *giganteus* and *P. hybridus*, its growth is slower and more civilised, but in common with others it is attractive to bees, which is important in early spring.

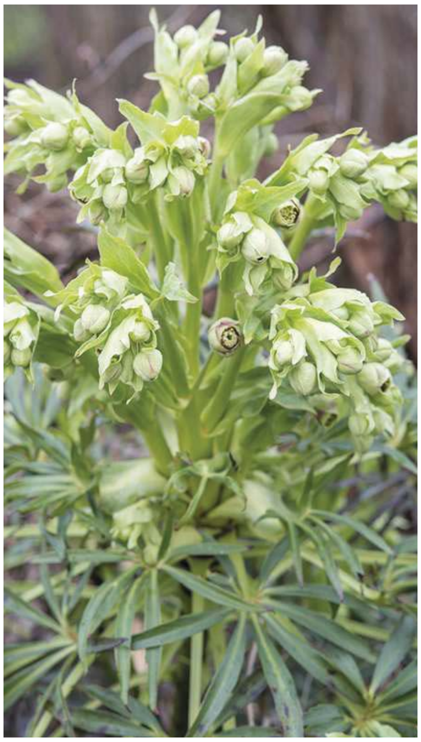
**Height** 30cm.
**Origin** Europe, Caucasus, southwest Asia.
**Conditions** Moist but well-drained soil; part to full shade.
**Hardiness** RHS H7.
**Season** Early spring.

## *LONICERA* X *PURPUSII* 'WINTER BEAUTY'

Winter can be hard for those of us who love to bring flowers into the house. Thank goodness then for *Lonicera* x *purpusii* 'Winter Beauty', which is so highly fragrant a single branch can transform your house. In temperate climates the shrubby honeysuckle is semi-evergreen with beautiful, dark-green leaves, and produces dark-red berries in the summer. The rough-textured grey bark on old stems makes it even more appealing. AGM.

**Height** 2m.
**Origin** Cross between *L. fragrantissima* and *L. standishii* (1920).
**Conditions** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun or part shade.
**Hardiness** RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.
**Season** Winter to early spring.





## *HELLEBORUS FOETIDUS*

One of the best-known hellebores with clusters of hanging green flowers. It's what in the Netherlands we call a *stinzenplanten* [see places to visit below] – plants that were introduced so long ago we tend to think of them as natives – and when grown among other *stinzenplanten* adds height and stature. From our window we can see this *Helleborus foetidus* all year long and we never tire of it. We also love the selections *Helleborus foetidus* Wester Flisk Group with red stems and flowers edged with dark red, and *Helleborus foetidus* 'Sopron' with silvery leaves.

**Height** 60cm.
**Origin** Western and southern Europe.
**Conditions** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade.
**Hardiness** RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.
**Season** Early spring.

## PLACES TO VISIT

Recommended places to see seasonal plants at their best both in Europe and the UK

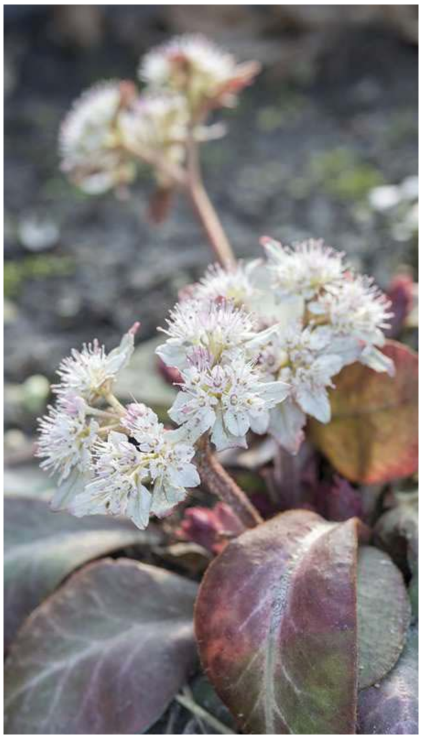
In the Netherlands, especially in the northern provinces of Friesland and Groningen, you find a special type of flora, known as *stinzenplanten,* growing around old manor houses (or *stinzen* as they're called in Friesland) and other older country gardens. These are spring plants, mainly, but not exclusively, bulbs and tubers that were imported into the Netherlands from the 16th century onwards and have naturalised so well we tend to think of them as natives. They're plants we cherish because they belong to our cultural heritage and many of the bulbs and perennials I've chosen this month fall into this category. Gardens and parks that feature these *stinzenplanten* among communities of native plants are protected and restored and one especially good example is **Stinze Stiens Garden**, in Stiens, Friesland. Once home to the local doctor, its garden was designed by the well-known Dutch designer Gerrit Vlaskamp (1834-1906), who designed many of Friesland and Groningen's parks. The current owners have restored the garden with care and knowledge, and after years of neglect many of the *stinzenplanten,* including *Crocus tommasinianus* and *Leucojum vernum,* have returned to their former glory. Smelbrege 6, 9051 BH Stiens, the Netherlands. stinze-stiens.nl

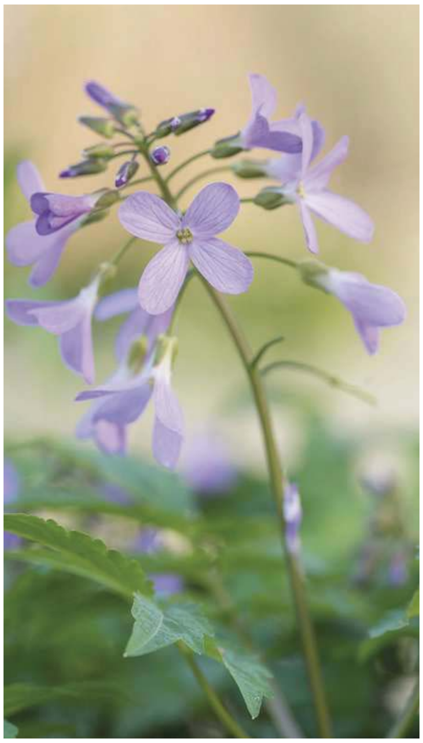
One of my favourite nurseries **Kwekerij De Hessenhof**, near Ede in the Netherlands, is a great source of inspiration for spring plants. It's an organic ▷

## *CHRYSOSPLENIUM MACROPHYLLUM*

One of the earliest flowering plants, this has leathery leaves that look a little like *Bergenia*. At our nursery we have planted this evergreen groundcover in an old metal container and it is doing fine. The plant itself makes long runners with new rosettes. These runners are unbelievably tough and virtually impossible to break, with a strong fibre running through them. The plant is extremely easy to propagate and once you have seen it you will love it. When we hold our hellebore days it often attracts more attention than the hellebores themselves.

**Height** 20cm.
**Origin** China.
**Conditions** Well-drained soil.
**Hardiness** RHS H6, USDA 6a-7a.
**Season** February to March.





## *CARDAMINE QUINQUEFOLIA*

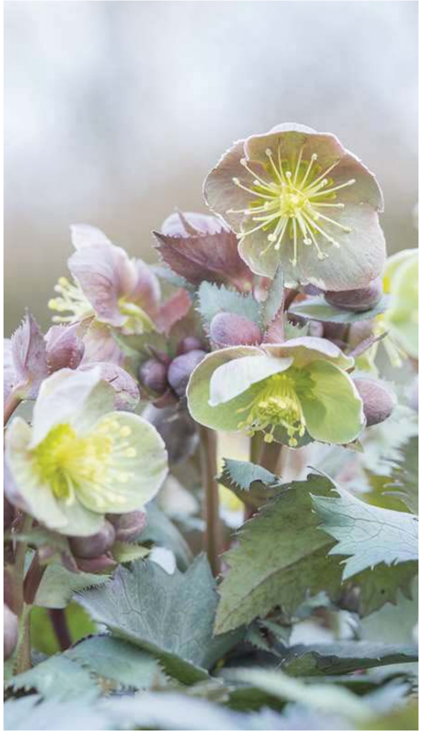
We love the entire *Cardamine* genus, but *Cardamine quinquefolia*, which spreads quickly to fill a large area, is one of the most beautiful. In our garden it starts blooming in late February, the fresh-green colour of its leaves showing such enthusiasm that for us this has become a plant that epitomises spring. Its delicate flowers are more lilac than purple, and like other cardamines are held above beautiful leaves. It seems fragile, but it is perfectly hardy, and prefers moist soil in partial shade. And best of all it is a magnet for early butterflies.

**Height** 25cm.
**Origin** Central and southern Europe.
**Conditions** Moist soil; full to part shade.
**Hardiness** RHS H6, USDA 6a-7a.
**Season** Spring.

## *HELLEBORUS* X *STERNII* 'SILVER SHADOW'

Among the slew of new hellebore hybrids and cultivars, all with fabulous colours, flower shapes and leaf structures, 'Silver Shadow' demands a special place. It has extraordinary flowers – a mix of pink, green and apricot colours – that rise wonderfully against the silvery leaves with serrated edges. It is lower and more compact than many other hellebores and does very well in pots. Unlike most other hellebores, it likes a sunny, dry and alkaline soil.

**Height** 35cm.
**Origin** Cross between *H. argutifolius* and *H. lividus*.
**Conditions** Well-drained soil; full sun.
**Hardiness** RHS H3, USDA 5a-9b.
**Season** Early spring.



▷ nursery owned by Hans and Miranda Kramer, and it is always a pleasure to walk through the planting beds and discover new plants. Hans has introduced plants from all over the world, but he's most famous for his selections of *Helleborus* x *hybridus*. In February he and Miranda organise hellebore days with highlights from their own selections. Hessenweg 41, 6718 TC Ede, the Netherlands. Tel +31 (0)318 617334, hessenhof.nl

Under the leadership of Robert and Jelena De Belder, the **Kalmthout Arboretum** in Belgium has become one of the most prestigious botanical collections in the world. It's a great garden to visit and has a huge collection (one of many) of *Hamamelis*. Every winter it hosts a witch hazel festival, which runs up until the end of February. Heuvel 8, 2920 Kalmthout, Belgium. Tel +32 (0)3 666 6741, arboretumkalmthout.be

Despite my reservations about galanthomania, I will concede that a walk among mass plantings of snowdrops can be one of February's great joys. One of the loveliest snowdrop walks in the UK is at **Colesbourne Park** in the Cotswolds. It was once home to the Victorian botanist and galanthophile Henry John Elwes (1846-1922) after whom the snowdrop *Galanthus elwesii* was named. His original snowdrop collection has grown into one of the largest in the UK, including more than 250 cultivars, with new ones added each year. Colesbourne Gardens, Colesbourne, nr Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL53 9NP. Tel 01242 870567, colesbournegardens.org.uk

Not far from Colesbourne Park is **Painswick Rococo Garden**, where you'll find more snowdrops along with *Cyclamen coum* and several hellebores. It's also the only garden from the rococo period open to the public. Painswick Rococo Garden Painswick, Gloucestershire GL6 6TH. Tel 01452 813204, rococogarden.org.uk

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# The Outsider

*It may feel counterintuitive to head north for an early spring, but Hannah Gardner is visiting Scotland in search of snowdrops and uncommon trees*

WORDS **HANNAH GARDNER** ILLUSTRATIONS **ALICE PATTULLO**

Dumfries and Galloway lies in the tranquil southwest corner of Scotland. Often overlooked in the rush to the Highlands and Islands, this lush, low-lying region has diverse natural beauty, a rich romantic history, traces of the poet Robert Burns and a mild microclimate, warmed by the Gulf Stream. Little-known historic estates with notable collections of uncommon trees, an impressive botanic garden and specialist nurseries, such as the late Michael Wickenden's Cally Gardens, put this region on my horticultural map.

Here, rich, free-draining, lime-free soil and high rainfall provide optimum growing conditions for 'champion' trees, rhododendrons, camellias and magnolias. You can breathe the scent of the sea, wander through towering evergreen woodlands, tiptoe through carpets of naturalised snowdrops and shelter beneath swaying palms all in the same afternoon.

## Inspiration for the trip

Botanic gardens would be nothing without their intrepid plant hunters, modern day and historic, and some of the most successful collectors have been Scottish. The arboreal seeds collected during early expeditions have now reached maturity.

In Japan (where the blooming of a popular wildflower can demand a news bulletin), I picked up the habit of celebrating a favourite species at its zenith. In February, this would have to be snowdrops in Scotland.

## When to go

The Scottish Snowdrop Festival runs from late January to mid-March.

## Where to go

Many country estates, botanic and private plantsmen's gardens fling open their gates and light the fires in their tearooms in celebration of this diminutive woodlander. At Logan, a satellite garden of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, you are never more than about a kilometre from the sea. The garden lies in a sheltered hollow (its name means 'small hollow' in Gaelic) and encloses the picturesque ruin of Castle Balzieland. As well as snowdrops, it houses a dynamic collection of exotic plants, and cultivates them using experimental methods, such as growing *Meconopsis* sp. and rhododendrons in peat walls and colonising antipodean tree fern trunks that once arrived on these shores as ships' ballast.

Notable shrubs, such as the luminescent *Rhododendron* 'RW Rye', *R. dauricum* 'Hokkaido' and the serene *Camellia saluenensis*, flower freely here during the early months of the year. With dark, neat leaves and single, softly swirling flowers in pastel shades, the latter stands apart. Hardy exotic climbers clamber over walls and also impress. Given the shelter of a wall, *Clianthus puniceus*, a confident New Zealander, offers bright, waxy flower racemes and a mass of fresh foliage during the darkest months. Snowdrops are naturalised throughout the garden and make for an interesting juxtaposition.

The majestic gardens and ruin of 16th-century Castle Kennedy occupy an isthmus between two lochs. This is a wide landscape of water, mature woodland, sweeping curved banks and 19th-century landforms that feel contemporary. It has a well-tended, enchanting walled garden where choice snowdrops such as *Galanthus woronowii* thrive under unusual mature trees and shrubs. As part of its festival, it opens a wonderful snowdrop route through private areas of the estate.

## Plants to grow at home

I first encountered *Polylepis australis* growing in the walled garden at Logan, where they have a gnarled 40-year-old tree. I just had to stop and examine its abundance of extravagantly peeling bark. Thick, rough and an attractive cinnamon brown, it is densely layered for protection against low temperatures. Don't be fooled by the name, though. The genus name is accurately descriptive of the many layers, but this is no Australian native. A maverick member of the rose family, it's a wind-pollinated evergreen that originates in the central spine of the Andes. Thriving in mountain ravines at a higher altitude than any other flowering woody plant (up to 3,000m), its hardiness is not in doubt, but it does require shelter from high winds.

As a medium-sized garden tree it is seldom grown, but well worth seeking out. It has a characterful growth habit and dense pinnate foliage, and the year-round interest of its bark certainly attracts attention. Insects shelter in the papery rolls of bark, and birds, especially blue tits and wrens, duly follow to feed and nest. As an elegant evergreen, it is also useful for screening. It is a good alternative to *Acer griseum* and *Betula jacquemontii*, both grown for their bark despite their naked presence in winter.

Besides requiring a sheltered spot and protection against deer if necessary, this pest- and disease-free tree is easy to grow. It prefers neutral to slightly acid soil, and once established it seeds itself around a little, so it's fun to dig up a seedling and nurture your own *Polylepis* forest.

## Gardens to visit

**Castle Kennedy Gardens**
Stair Estates, Sheuchan, Castle Kennedy,
Stranraer DG9 8SL. Tel 01581 400225,
castlekennedygardens.com

**Logan Botanic Garden**
Port Logan, nr Stranraer, Dumfries and
Galloway DG9 9ND. Tel 01776 86023,
rbge.org.uk

## Guides and maps

*Stranraer and Glenluce OS Landranger Map #82* (Ordnance Survey, £8.99)

*Dumfries and Galloway: Guide to 200 Walks and Climbs*, by Robert Denison Walton (Dinwiddie, 1980)

## Where to stay

For a stylish country house, look no further than Knockinaam Lodge, Portpatrick,
Dumfries and Galloway DG9 9AD.
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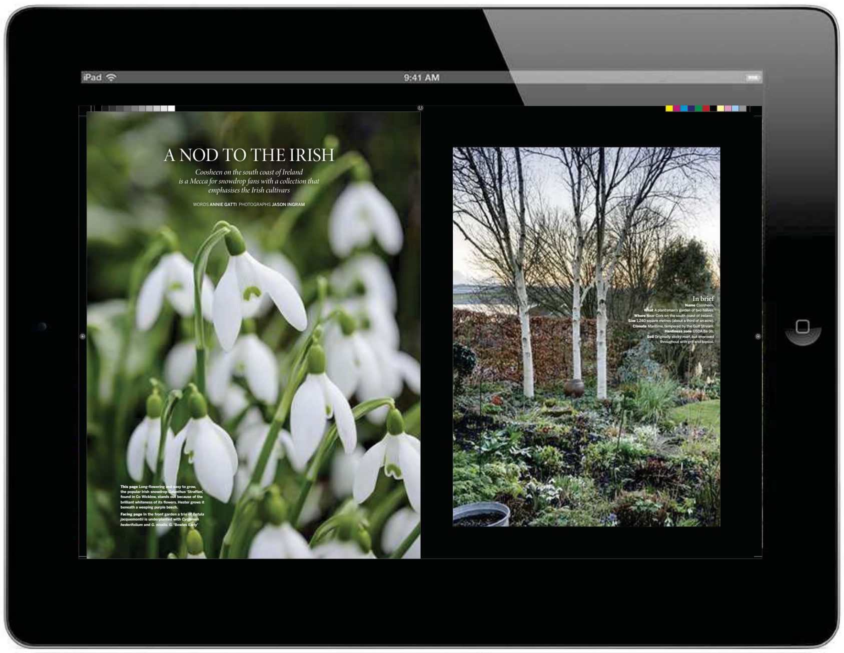
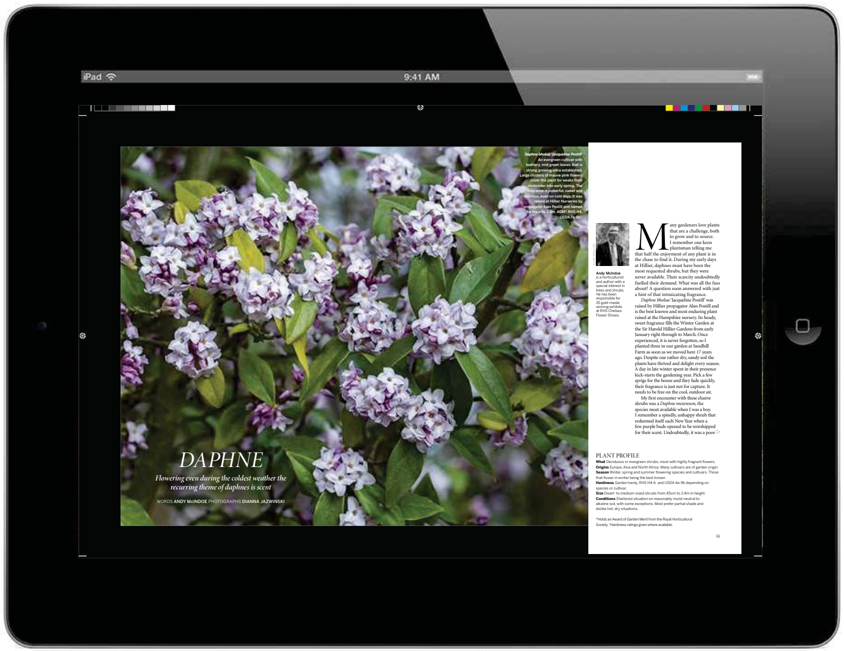


A NOD TO THE IRISH

*Coosheen on the south coast of Ireland is a Mecca for snowdrop fans with a collection that emphasises the Irish cultivars*

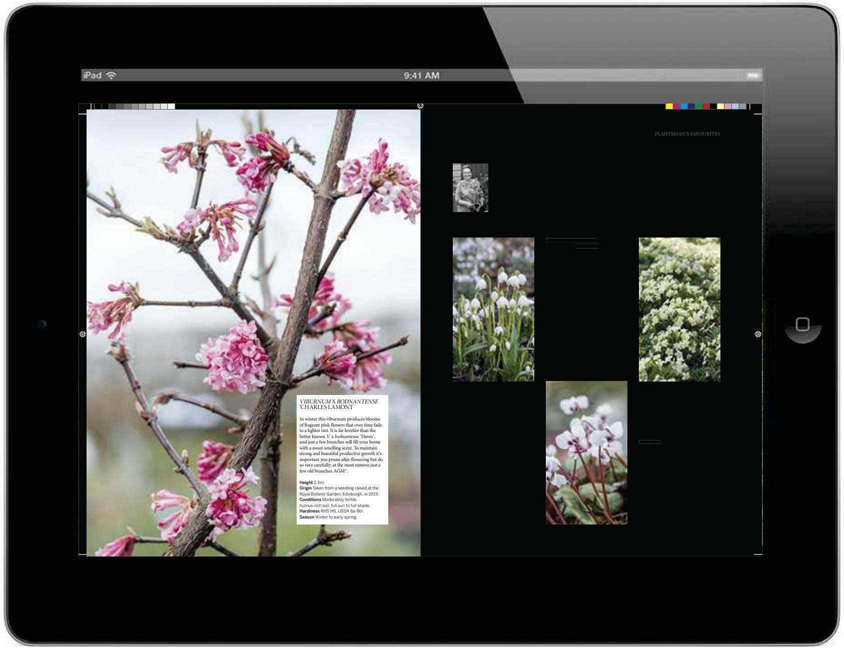
WORDS **ANNIE GATTI** PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**



*DAPHNE*

*Flowering even during the coldest weather the recurring theme of daphnes is scent*

WORDS **ANDY McINDOE** PHOTOGRAPHS **DIANNA JAZWINSKI**



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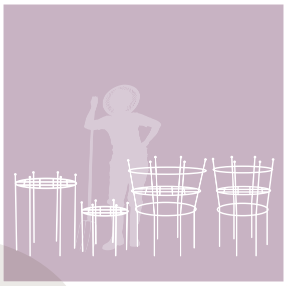

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GARDENING TALENT

# Bridget Elworthy and Henrietta Courtauld

*Known collectively as The Land Gardeners, friends Bridget (left) and Henrietta are fast establishing a reputation for their walled garden designs and impressive cut flowers – as well as their passion for compost*

PORTRAIT CLARE RICHARDSON

**Earliest garden memory** We both have similar memories of running mud pie factories and conducting the herbaceous borders as if each of the plants were part of an orchestra.

**Who has inspired your career?** Beatrix Havergal – a brilliant horticulturist and passionate educator, who founded Waterperry School of Horticulture in 1932; Lady Eve Balfour a British farmer, educator and organic gardening pioneer and a founding figure in the organic movement; Vita Sackville-West for her love of abundance and wild fun, and Nancy Lancaster for a bit of glamour.

**How did you meet and what sparked your idea of working together?** We met through a friend. We were both working in the world of gardens and realised we shared a similar philosophy about gardens and growing – a belief in a living, biodiverse garden with healthy soil at its core.

**Favourite planting style** Frothy, natural and romantic. We love Cecil Beaton. We love the romanticism of the 1930 and 40s, and we also love rows of flowers and vegetables in a walled garden.

**Important thing to remember when gardening** Gardening is not about perfection or control – it is a process of learning and evolving.

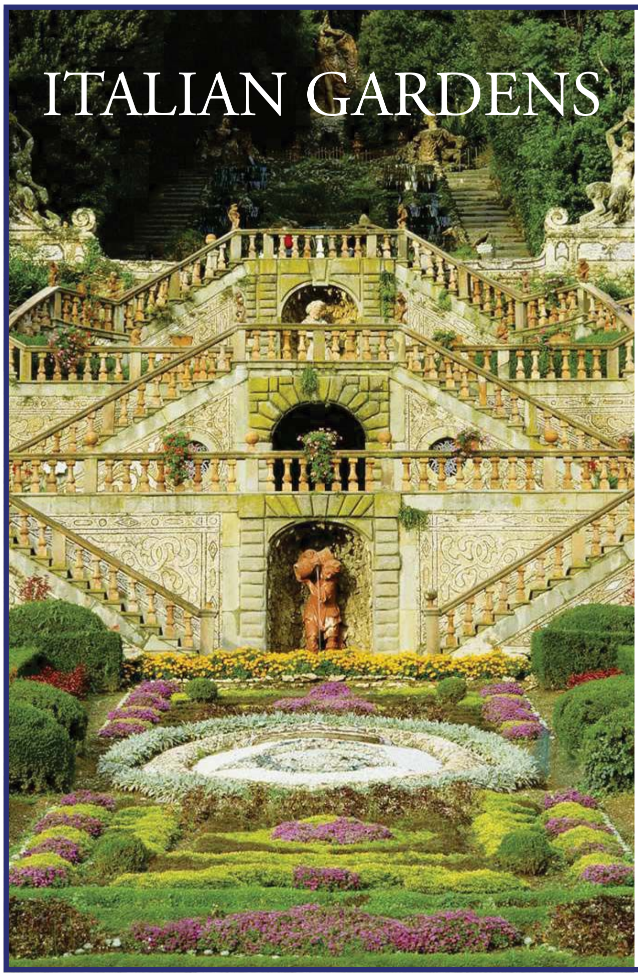
**Most useful plant that you grow** Peonies – they are wonderful cut flowers and the roots have medicinal properties. We are working with herbalists who use the roots in their preparations.

**Favourite gardening websites or social media** On Instagram we follow @idleriver [photographer Howard Sooley], @fernverrow [biodynamic growers] and @mccormickcharlie [flower grower]. We read the newsletters from Kay Baxter at the Koanga Institute, Graeme Sait at Nutri-tech Solutions and Patrick Holden at the Sustainable Food Trust. Acres USA is a good source of interesting books.

**What's the next big project you'll be tackling in the garden?** Building and testing our compost windrows [layered compost rows], and feeding the soil with compost and compost teas, growing more herbs and learning more about the medicinal properties of plants both for humans, animals and plants.

**Contact** studio@thelandgardeners.com

You'll find a programme of their workshops and events at thelandgardeners.com. Events take place in both London and at their Oxfordshire base at Wardington Manor.



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WORDS **SARAH PRICE**

**Some plants in my garden are familiar and beloved companions whose appearance marks the year. Other plants are exciting prospects that I'm still trialling to discover their full potential. I prefer varieties that possess the elegance and poise of their relatives in nature. They look good singularly or en masse. But it's not just about how plants look. I love flowers that animate the garden at certain times of the year by attracting clouds of bees and butterflies.**

## Annuals

### 1 *ERIGERON ANNUUS*

Myriad simple, fine-rayed, white daisies appear to float in mid air. Self-seeds vigorously, a desirable trait only for wilder areas where there is plenty of competition. **Height (H)** 1.5m. **Spread (S)** 40cm. **Conditions (C)** Dry sun. **Season of interest (SI)** July to November. **Hardiness rating (HR)** RHS H4, USDA 3a-8b†.

### 2 *PAPAVER DUBIUM* SUBSP. *LECOQII* 'ALBIFLORUM'

Luminous in sunshine, its clear-pink petals float just above the fresh growth of early summer. Poppies are at their best when sown direct, emerging with surprise and spontaneity. **H** 50cm. **S** 30cm. **C** Fertile, well-drained soil; full sun. Not great on wet clay soil. **SI** May to June. **HR** USDA 6a-9b.

### 3 *PHACELIA TANACETIFOLIA*

A green manure I sow for its soft lavender-blue flowers, that are decoratively shaped like a scorpion's curved tail. Beloved by bees and insects, it's unfussy and fast growing, with dense, weed-suppressing foliage. Robust winter annual. **H** 60cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Fertile, well-drained, soil; full sun. **SI** March to May. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 7a-10b.

## Bulbs

### 4 *ALLIUM OBLIQUUM*

Robust yet dainty-looking allium that elegantly emerges above early fresh foliage. Newly unfurled, lime-yellow flowers droop before standing upright on thin, glaucous stems that have a quirky yet graceful line. I plant this with the delicate pink umbels of *Pimpinella major* 'Rosea'. Gently self seeds. **H** 40cm. **S** 10cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; sheltered, sunny position. **SI** May to June. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 6a-9b.

### 5 *ANEMONE NEMOROSA* 'ROBINSONIANA'

Although you can't surpass our native anemone for its simplicity, I love this for its ethereal lilac colour that glows in the shade. Grow en masse to appreciate how their petals open and stems straighten in spring sunshine. AGM*. **H** 15cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist or well-drained soil; part shade. **SI** April to May. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.

### 6 *CAMASSIA LEICHTLINII* SUBSP. *SUKSDORFII* 'ALBA'

A North American bulb with tall, intense blue spires. Looks exotic yet not out of place flowering in long grass among British natives, such as cow parsley. Best grown in generous drifts as if self sown. Will naturalise quickly given moisture and free-draining soil. **H** 1m. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun or part shade. **SI** May to June. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 3a-7b.

### 7 *CROCUS TOMMASINIANUS*

Slender crocus that battles hard through winter, opening wide in spells of sunshine. Self-seeds profusely and will spread to form unbelievable carpets of purple across borders and lawns. AGM. **H** 10cm. **S** 10cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** February to March. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.

### 8 *CYCLAMEN HEDERIFOLIUM*

Prospering in dry shade, often at the foot of an old tree, these autumn-flowering cyclamen will in time form venerable colonies. Marbled, ivy-shaped leaves in summer followed by rosy-pink flowers. AGM. **H** 10cm. **S** 15cm. **C** Well-drained soil; part shade, sheltered position. **SI** October to November. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

### 9 *FRITILLARIA MELEAGRIS*

Iconic white-and-purple chequered bells dangle like lanterns on delicate stems. When naturalised in damp grassland, the purple and sometimes white blooms create hypnotic pointillist-like patterns among the grass. **H** 30cm. **S** 8cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun or part shade. **SI** April and May. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 3a-7b.

### 10 *GALANTHUS NIVALIS*

Simple and elegant, I always return to our resilient native snowdrop. The colonies that transform banks and ancient churchyards with their pure-white blooms are testament to its tenacity. Plant in the green as generously as you can. Will naturalise. AGM. **H** 10cm. **S** 10cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; shade. **SI** January and February. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 3a-9b.

### 11 *GLADIOLUS* 'RUBY'

Incredibly lavish yet refined gladiolus, with rich, velvet-red flowers that adorn a tall,

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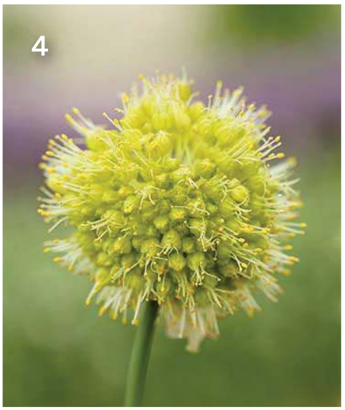
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2 & 8 JASON INGRAM. 3 CLARE GAINEY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. 4 ANNAICK GUITTENY. 10 IMAGEBROKER / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO.

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*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.

arching flower spike. I weave it through low, tussock grasses so that its sword-like leaves and elegant, upright form can be fully appreciated. **H** 1m. **S** 1m. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun, sheltered position. **SI** July to September. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 3a-8b.

**12 *LILIUM MARTAGON***
Turk's cap lilies look spectacular when naturalised en mass in rough grass. The vertical stems are covered in masses of dusky-mauve flowers, with scrolled-back petals and pronounced, orange anthers that dangle from their throats. Best in dappled shade. **H** 1.5m. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade, sheltered position. **SI** June to July. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

**13 *NARCISSUS* 'WHITE LADY'**
Slender, white buds open wide into a simple flower with well-spaced petals and a shallow, pale-yellow trumpet. After flowering, the fine leaves and stems fade away discretely. Delicately scented. **H** 50cm. **S** 10cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** April. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

**14 *NECTAROSCORDUM SICULUM***
Alluring allium with pinky-green pendulous flowers that dangle decoratively around a central upright stem. Looks beautiful among fresh-green foliage, bronze-toned grasses and pink flowers. Bulks up quickly in sunny, free-draining soil. **H** 1m. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** May and June. **HR** RHS H5.

> *Poppies are at their best when they are sown direct, and are emerging with surprise and spontaneity*

**15 *NERINE BOWDENII***
A lily impersonator with lipstick-pink, frilly flowers that have a glittery sheen in the sun. Strong, slender stems and a long-lasting flower make them perfect for cutting and are so uplifting among the seedheads of autumn. Shallow planting suits them best. AGM. **H** 50cm. **S** 10cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun in a sheltered position. **SI** September to November. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 7a-10b.

**16 *TULIPA HUMILIS***
Short species tulip that is perfect peppering sun-baked gravel plantings with intense magenta accents. Its sparse narrow leaves lie low and nearly flat, emphasising the goblet flowers. **H** 15cm. **S** 10cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun, sheltered position. **SI** March to April. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 3a-9b.

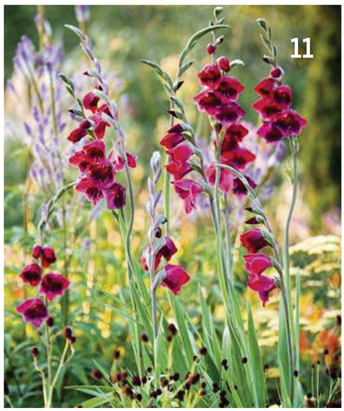
**17 *TULIPA SYLVESTRIS***
Dainty, wild tulip, ideal for naturalising through grass. Rich-yellow flowers open wide like goblets in the sun. Each petal has an endearing curl at its tip. Drought tolerant once established. **H** 35cm. **S** 10cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun in a sheltered position. **SI** March to April. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

## Climbers

**18 *CLEMATIS* 'BETTY CORNING'**
Sweetly scented and prolific, this clematis has the vigour typical of *viticella* species. Will scramble along climbing roses, shrubs and trees forming dense clouds of pretty, pale-lilac bells. Plant in a sunny position for maximum flowers. AGM. **H** 3m. **S** 1m. **C** Moisture-retentive, well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. Cover base of plant with pebbles to keep cool. **SI** July to September. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b.

**19 *CLEMATIS* X *TRITERNATA* 'RUBROMARGINATA'**
Hundreds of marzipan-scented flowers, which look as if they've been generously dipped in ruby-red ink, are held in clouds from midsummer to early autumn. Tolerant of dry soils and shady positions. Flowers freely. **H** 4m. **S** 1.5m. **C** Fertile, well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** July to September. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 5a-8b.

**20 *ROSA* MORTIMER SACKLER (='AUSORTS')**
Intensely scented with deep-pink buds and paler flowers held on red-flushed, near thornless branches that makes picking them a pleasure. A repeat flowerer that grows into a tall shrub or short climber with an attractive loose habit. AGM. **H** 4m. **S** 1m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil. **SI** Summer. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 5a-10a. ▷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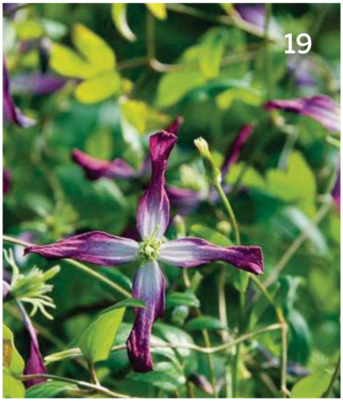
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9 & 14 JASON INGRAM; 11 CLIVE NICHOLS / GAP PHOTOS; 12 TIM GAINEY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 19 GARDEN WORLD IMAGES LTD / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO.

## Ferns

### ▷ 21 *ASPLENIUM SCOLOPENDRIUM*

Hart's tongue is an indispensable fern that grows in moist and dry niches. The gentle ripple of its glossy, evergreen leaves stand out against the lacy patterns of companion ferns. **H** 30cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Humus-rich, moist but well-drained soil; can survive dry shade when established. **SI** Evergreen. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b.

### 22 *BLECHNUM SPICANT*

A hardy native fern that forms generous colonies in shady woods. Its fertile fronds with near-black stems and glossy divided leaves emerge compact out of evergreen rosettes. AGM. **H** 50cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist soil; in light shade, will tolerate dry shade. **SI** Evergreen. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 6a-8b.

### 23 *ONOCLEA SENSIBILIS*

Known as the sensitive fern on account of its frost tenderness. Red-tinged new growth in spring unfurls into upright fronds. Creates a lush understorey in a damp spot, gradually creeping by rhizomes. Requires waterside and moist soil conditions. AGM. **H** 50cm. **S** 2.5m. **C** Moist soil; part to full shade. **SI** Spring to autumn. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

### 24 *OSMUNDA REGALIS*

A deciduous fern that forms stately, long-lived clumps in damp, part shade. Develops raised crowns that look prehistoric as their spring fronds unfurl. I partner it with diminutive subjects, such as wood anemones. AGM. **H** 1.2m. **S** 1m. **C** Moist soil, good for very wet sites; full sun to full shade. **SI** Green spring to summer; autumn colour. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 3a-9b.

### 25 *POLYPODIUM VULGARE*

Resilient, evergreen fern, that will form stable communities in the most inhospitable of locations. It will shrivel in periods of drought, only to reward you with a carpet of green, like a finely designed tapestry, in late summer. **H** 35cm. **S** 1m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade in sheltered position. Tolerant of moderately moist conditions. **SI** Evergreen. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 3a-6b.

## Grasses and restios

### 26 *BRIZA MAXIMA*

A clump-forming annual grass, with low, leafy tufts and beautiful flowerheads composed of a mass of spikelets. These dainty, trembling 'lockets' are flushed purple before turning golden. Useful for creating a meadow-like feel. Self seeds. **H** 45cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** May to August. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

### 27 *CALAMAGROSTIS EMODENSIS*

Initially, I was unimpressed with this grass as I hadn't provided it with the space it needed. Now it's in gravel so that its arching stems and pale-pink flowers can be appreciated. The fluffy seedheads are so persistent it almost seems a pity to cut them down in early spring. **H** 1.2m. **S** 40cm. **C** Well-drained soil; sun or light shade if soil not too dry. **SI** June; flowerheads stay through winter.

### 28 *CHONDROPETALUM TECTORUM*

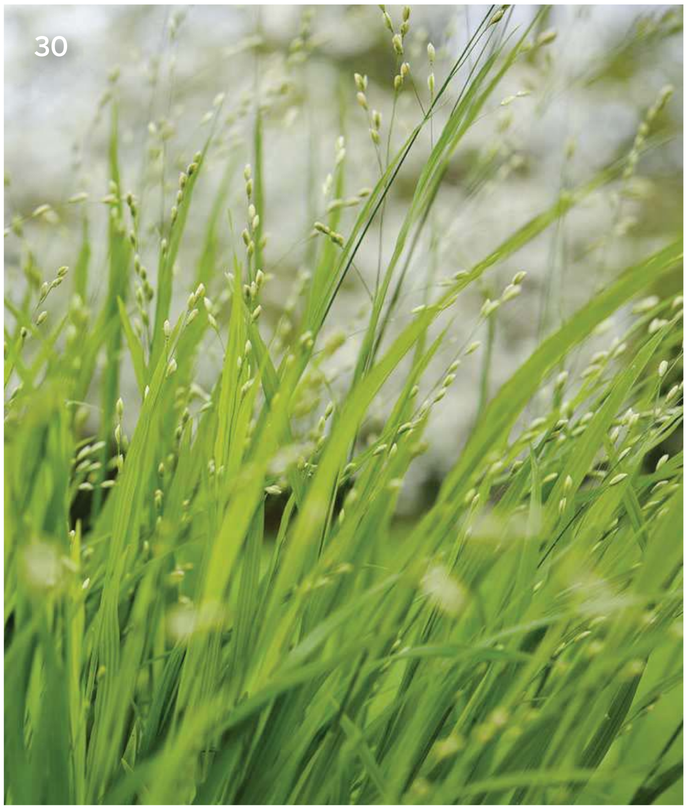
One of the hardiest restios with narrow, rush-like foliage and tightly bunched, dark-brown filaments. I use it as a dark, evergreen backdrop to make its colourful South African counterparts – dieramas and gladioli – glow. Good for coastal gardens. **H** 50cm. **S** 1m. **C** Fertile, well-drained soil (will not tolerate waterlogging); full sun. **SI** Evergreen. **HR** RHS H3, USDA 9a-11.

### 29 *HORDEUM JUBATUM*

Loved for its long, purplish-pink, silvery awns that have a spectacular halo when backlit by sunshine. At its best when grown in an open, gravel scree, where its plumes appear to float above dianthus, thymes and other grounded sun lovers. Produces flowers over a long period. Best grown as an annual. **H** 1m. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** June to July. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

### 30 *MELICA ALTISSIMA* 'ALBA'

White, bead-like flowers hang in airy sprays on low, gently arching, fresh foliage. Lovely planted en masse or among ferns so you can see the spikelets tremble in the breeze. Cut down after first flush of flowers to stimulate a second. **H** 50cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Fertile, well-drained soil; full sun or part shade. **SI** May to June. **HR** RHS H6. ▷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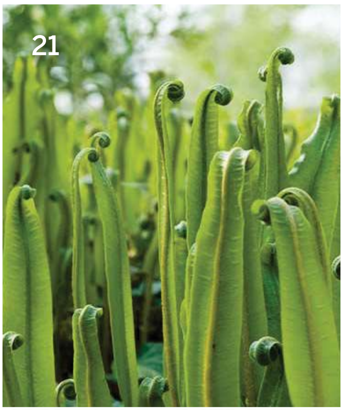
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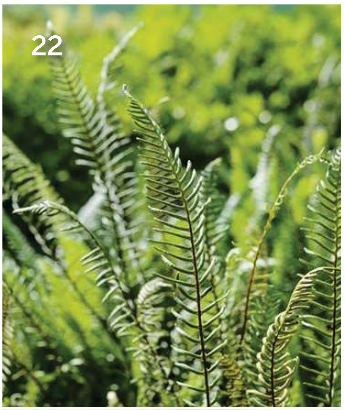
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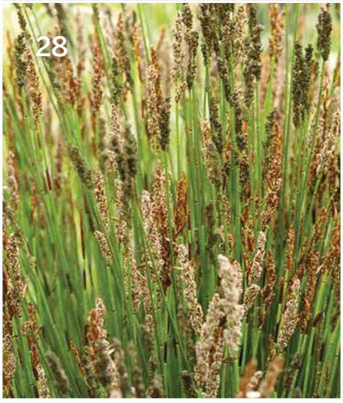
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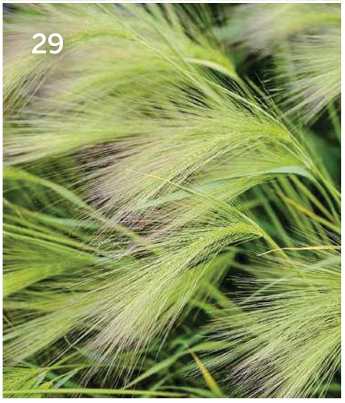
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21 FLOWERPHOTOS / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 22, 29 & 30 JASON INGRAM; 28 MBP-PLANTS / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO.

*THE FLUFFY SEEDHEADS OF* CALAMAGROSTIS EMODENSIS *ARE SO PERSISTENT IT ALMOST SEEMS A PITY TO CUT THEM DOWN IN EARLY SPRING*

MAAYKE DE RIDDER

▷ **31 *MOLINIA CAERULEA* SUBSP. *CAERULEA* ‘HEIDEBRAUT’**
Indispensable mid-height moor grass. Upright flower stems gradually fan outwards as they gain height. Beautiful as a singular accent, en masse, or when woven through herbaceous plantings as a gauzy veil. **H** 1.2m. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained, neutral to acid soils; full sun to part shade. **SI** June to November. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

**32 *MOLINIA CAERULEA* SUBSP. *ARUNDINACEA* ‘TRANSPARENT’**
Its airy, see-through inflorescences create a shimmering cloud of flower. Large mounds of green foliage support stems that reach upwards spreading outwards in an arc that captures the light. **H** 1.8m. **S** 60cm. **C** Well-drained soil; sun. **SI** June to November. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

## Half-hardy perennials

**33 *DAHLIA AUSTRALIS***
Most sultry of all dahlias with star-shaped, lilac-pink blooms that droop downwards. Even the leaves are more refined and slender. Borderline hardy. **H** 1.5m. **S** 75cm. **C** Moist but not waterlogged soil; full sun. **SI** July to October. **HR** RHS H2, USDA 7a-10b.

**34 *DAHLIA* ‘DOWNHAM ROYAL’**
Perfectly formed, deep-burgundy, pom-pom flowers. Impeccable in a vase, where close inspection reveals the pale-pink hairline drawn on each petal. Dahlias are greedy feeders, which means good soil is essential. **H** 1m. **S** 30cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; sheltered spot in full sun. **SI** July to November. **HR** RHS H2, USDA 7a-10b.

**35 *DAHLIA* ‘EDINBURGH’**
A bi-coloured beauty with a spirograph-like pattern of royal-purple petals that fade to white. Petals have a beautiful curl as they open out, adding to hypnotic effect. Easy to grow with prolific flowers for cutting. **H** 1.25m. **S** 40cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun (the more sun, the bigger the blooms), shelter from wind. **SI** July to October. **HR** RHS H2, USDA 7a-10b.

**36 *DIGITALIS CANARIENSIS***
Dramatic tall spires of apricot or tawny-bronze flowers that are all the more pronounced against the dark stems and evergreen pointed leaves. Becomes woody with age. **H** 1.5m. **S** 1.5m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun or part shade. Don’t grow outside if frosts are likely. **SI** July to August. **HR** RHS H2, USDA 9a-11.

**37 *SALVIA CURVIFLORA***
Evergreen tender sage, with hot-pink flowers that illuminate a late-summer garden. Each bloom is covered in fine hairs creating a fuzzy outline that glows in sunlight. Good for containers. **H** 90cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Well-drained soil; sun. **SI** July to October. **HR** RHS H3, USDA 4a-8b.

**38 *SALVIA LEUCANTHA* ‘PURPLE VELVET’**
Downy foliage, calyces and flowers look, and feel, like velvet. A shrubby plant but its arching form and the wide spacing of its silver-green leaves mean it has grace. I grow it near pathways or in large containers to best appreciate its sprays of purple flowers. Easily grown from cuttings. **H** 1m. **S** 80cm. **C** Well-drained, rich soil; sheltered spot in sun. Winter protection from frost. **SI** Late summer to autumn. **HR** USDA 8a-10b.

## Perennials

**39 *ALTHAEA CANNABINA***
Almost too pretty with hollyhock-like, rose-pink flowers widely spaced on narrow, willowy stems. I’ve yet to trial it in my garden but it’s so exceptionally tall, elegant and diaphanous, I had to include it. **H** 2m. **S** 1m. **C** Moist but well-drained, moderately fertile soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** July to October. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

**40 *BUPLEURUM FALCATUM***
Long-flowering clouds of small, lime-yellow umbels on fine, branching stems. Narrow leaves add to the airy look. A hardy, biennial that loves sun and will self sow in well-drained soil. Adds sparkle and immediate volume to new planting schemes while slower-growing, longer-lived perennials become established. **H** 50cm. **S** 20cm. **C** Dry soil; sun. **SI** June to July. **HR** RHS H4.

**41 *CALLIRHOE BUSHII***
Lightly scrambles over more grounded neighbours, peppering them with the eye-popping magenta of its mallow-like

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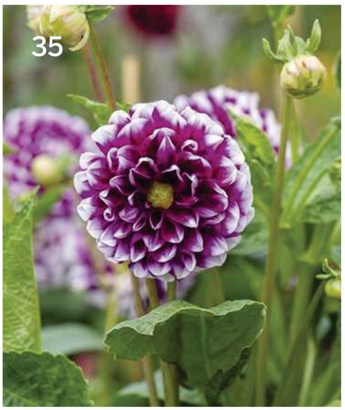
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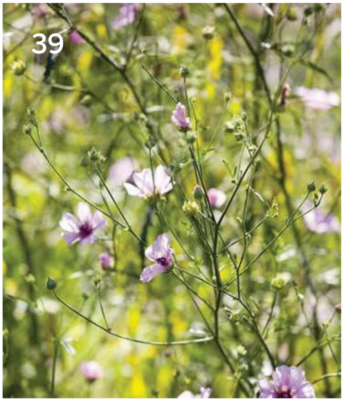
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31 JASON INGRAM; 35 JONATHAN NEED / GAP PHOTOS; 37 REX MAY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO;
39 RACHEL WARNE; 46 MARCUS HARPUR / GAP PHOTOS.

blooms. Native to dry prairies. **H** 45cm. **S** 90cm. **C** Well-drained soil; sun. **SI** June to August. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.

**42 *CENOLOPHIUM DENUDATUM***
Soft, white umbels age beautifully above finely cut, filigree foliage. A useful transition plant to visually link formal and wilder garden areas. AGM. **H** 1m. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** July to October. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b.

**43 *CEPHALARIA DIPSACOIDES***
Scabious-like, pale-yellow flowers on wiry stems, that make them appear to float in mid air. A wonderfully diaphanous plant that is easy to weave through light grasses and natural-looking perennials. **H** 2m. **S** 1m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** June to August. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 3a-9b.

**44 *CIRSIUM CANUM***
Rich-purple thimbles tower above mounds of serrated, silver-green leaves. Best in deep borders or naturalistic settings where its stately presence can be appreciated. May self-seed so chop after flowering. **H** 2m. **S** 30cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil, not too dry; full sun to part shade. **SI** August to September. **HR** USDA 3a-8b.

**45 *DIANTHUS CRUENTUS***
Pinpricks of blood-red flowers offset by dark calyces make a statement when partnered with purple groundcovers, such as thyme, or the fuchsia pink of its longer-stemmed relation *Dianthus carthusianorum*. Given an open, free-draining spot both are easy to grow from seed. **H** 60cm. **S** 15cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** June to August. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.

> *Everything about dieramas is exquisite –their papery bracts, tubular bell-like flowers, arching stems – even the seedheads*

**46 *DIERAMA PULCHERRIMUM* 'BLACKBIRD'**
Everything about dieramas is exquisite – their papery bracts, tubular bell-like flowers, arching stems – even the seedheads. Water well in dry summers but ensure they don't get waterlogged in winter. **H** 1m. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained, fertile, loamy soil; full sun. **SI** July to August. **HR** RHS H4.

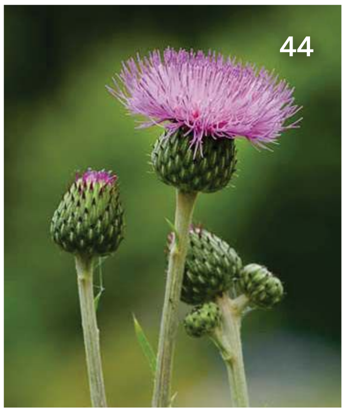
**47 *ECHINACEA PALLIDA***
Drooping, pale-pink petals artfully arranged around a dark central cone make this immediately recognisable. Luminous autumn grasses, such as *Andropogon*, make the dark accents of its wonderful seedheads stand out. **H** 1m. **S** 30cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** July to September (seedheads into early winter). **HR** RHS H5, USDA 3a-10b.

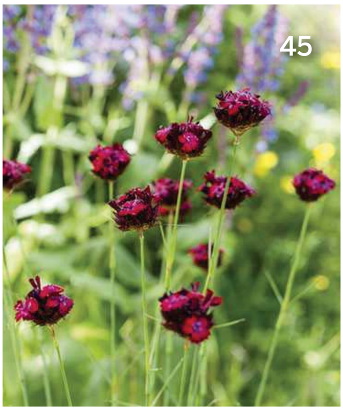
**48 *ERYNGIUM PANDANIFOLIUM* 'PHYSIC PURPLE'**
Worth growing for the spectacular sculptural seedhead that will suddenly appear and surprise you. The tight, maroon flowers look similar to those of a sanguisorba, but are held high above an architectural clump of spiny, narrow foliage. **H** 2.5m. **S** 90cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun in a free-draining spot to prevent winter rot. **SI** October to December. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 8a-10b.

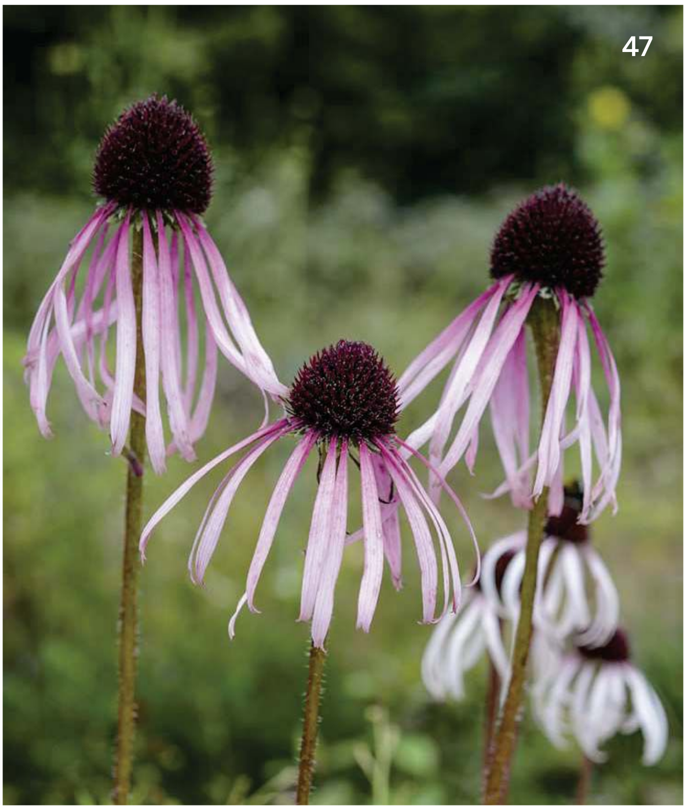
**49 *EUPATORIUM MACULATUM* 'RIESENSCHIRM'**
The *Eupatorium* I reach for when I need to match a setting's grand scale. It looks incredible at every stage; dark-purple stems support heads of earthy-pink flowers that age into a towering winter skeleton. AGM. **H** 2.5m. **S** 1.5m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** July to November. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

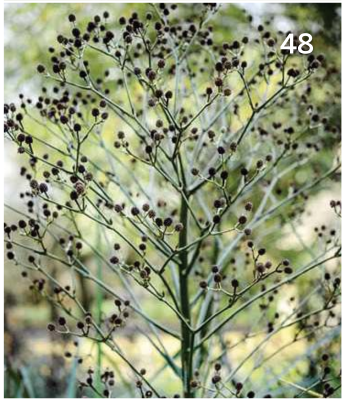
**50 *EUPHORBIA CERATOCARPA***
Large, frothy, lime-green bracts that keep flowering from spring through to winter. Narrow, pale-green leaves add to its elegance. Grows in wide clumps and requires a very dry position in full sun. AGM. **H** 1m. **S** 2.5m. **C** Well-drained, light soil; full sun. **SI** March to July. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 6a-8b.

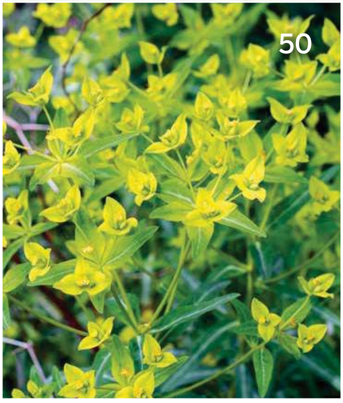
**51 *EUPHORBIA OBLONGATA***
Easily grown from seed, this lime-yellow spurge flowers from spring to winter in my garden. Forms compact, knee-high clumps, so ideal for smaller spaces. Native to poor soils so don't fertilise. It's recommended you grow from seed every year, but it successfully overwinters in ▷











44 BLICKWINKEL / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO: 45, 47 & 48 JASON INGRAM: 50 MARTIN HUGHES-JONES / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO.

▷ free-draining situations. **H** 50cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** May to September. **HR** RHS H5.

### 52 *GLAUCIUM CORNICULATUM*

I love the theatricality of the colour contrast between its pale, glaucous leaves and scarlet flowers. Good for a gravel garden where you can admire its crinkled, evergreen leaves. **H** 60cm. **S** 40cm. **C** Well-drained soil; sun. **SI** May to November. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 6a-10b.

### 53 *KIRENGESHOMA PALMATA*

Elegant woodlander from Asia, with soft-yellow, broadly bell-shaped flowers. Grows into a small, graceful shrub with reddish purple stems and vertically spaced, pale-green palmate leaves that overlap. Needs deep, leafy soil. **H** 1m. **S** 1m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; part to full shade. **SI** August to September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

### 54 *LASER TRILOBUM*

Newly introduced umbellifer; carefully defined like a line drawing. Stems terminate in elongated, spoke-like stalks with rounded clusters of white flowers at their tips. Makes a statement in dappled light. **H** 1.2m. **C** Moist soil; part shade. **SI** May to June.

### 55 *LIATRIS ASPERA*

Nodules of tightly clustered, needle-thin flowers are widely spaced on a tall spire, creating a clear silhouette. The red-violet flowers continue for weeks in mid to late summer. Striking as an exotic vertical accent among less defined forms. **H** 90cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Well-drained soil (drought tolerant); full sun. **SI** August to October. **HR** USDA 3a-8b.

> *I grow* Ligusticum lucidum *in gravel where the, lacy mounds of evergreen leaves can be appreciated*

### 56 *LIGUSTICUM LUCIDUM*

I grow this in gravel where the lacy mounds of evergreen leaves can be appreciated. The ammi-like, white umbels have a strong seedhead that stands well, casting defined shadows into early winter. Usually monocarpic. **H** 1m. **C** Well-drained soil; part or full sun. **SI** June to July. **HR** USDA 4a-8b.

### 57 *LINARIA PURPUREA*

Slender toadflax spires that look ethereal when allowed to self sow and grow up through plantings. Creates an hypnotic effect en masse, especially when partnered with the acid green of parsnip flowers. **H** 1m. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained, sandy soil; full sun. **SI** June to October. **HR** RHS H6.

### 58 *LYCHNIS CORONARIA* 'BLOOD RED'

For me, this plant has it all: intense colour, summer-long blooms (especially if deadheaded), downy-grey leaves and an open, branching mid-height structure that makes it versatile and easy to place. **H** 70cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** May to July.

### 59 *ORIGANUM LAEVIGATUM* 'HERRENHAUSEN'

Dark calices and a rich, dusky purple pink flower give this marjoram the edge. Lovely cut and mixed into informal posies. The vertical branches stand well after flowering, creating a wiry, dark silhouette through the winter. AGM. **H** 50cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained soil;full sun, suitable for exposed site. **SI** June to September. **HR** RHS H6.

### 60 *PAEONIA MASCULA*

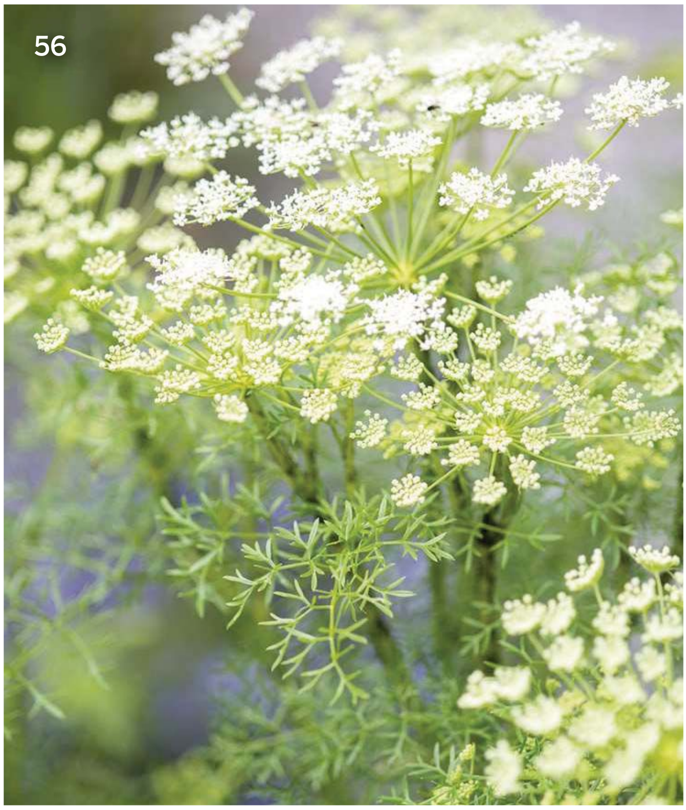
Lipstick-pink flowers are slightly more open than cup shaped and have dense clusters of yellow stamens. Flowers prolifically in sun. Easy once established, but doesn't like to be disturbed. AGM. **H** 80cm. **S** 1m. **C** Deep, fertile, moist to well-drained, humus-rich soil; full sun to part shade, sheltered position. **SI** May. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 7a-10b.

### 61 *PENSTEMON BARBATUS* 'COCCINEUS'

Narrow, tubular flowers that are a very bright shade of coral. Stunning with *Echinacea* in prairie-style plantings where the tall, branching and floriferous stems create a tangerine haze. Needs very sharp drainage. **H** 1.5m. **S** 30cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** June to August. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 3a-8b.

### 62 *PERSICARIA AMPLEXICAULIS* 'ROSEA'

Fine, pale-pink spires bloom until the first frost. The rhythmical repetition of the spikes, their long season and their muted shade makes this invaluable for knitting together planting schemes. Adaptable and easy.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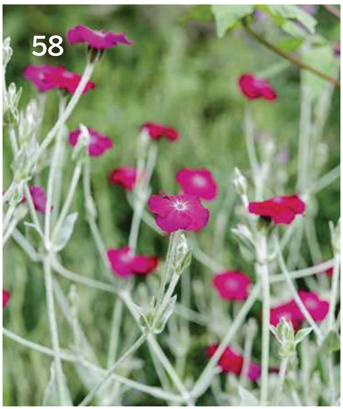
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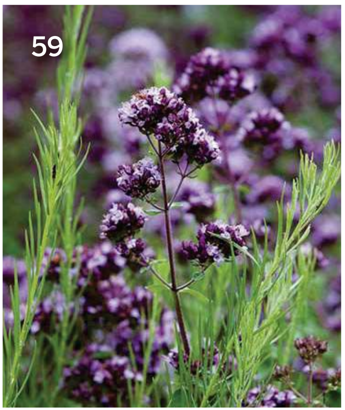
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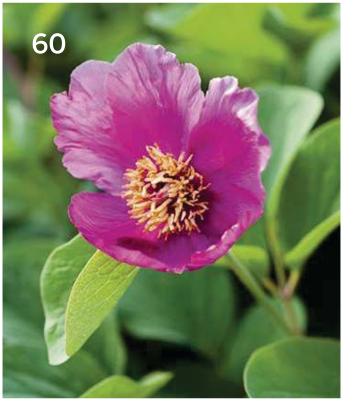
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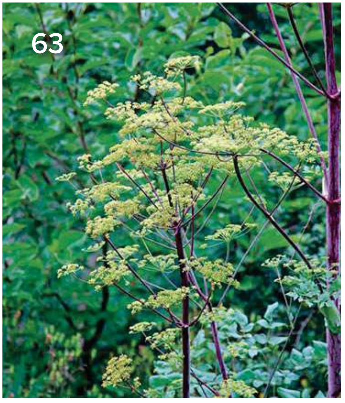
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56 MAAYKE DE RIDDER; 58 JASON INGRAM; 59 THE GARDEN COLLECTION / FP / BILDAGENTUR BECK; 60 NIALL MCDIARMID / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 63 REX MAY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO.

**H** 1.2m. **S** 1m. **C** Poorly drained or moist soil; full sun or part shade. **SI** July to September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

### 63 *PEUCEDANUM VERTICILLARE*

You need to surround this magnificent giant with space to appreciate its towering status. Layers of boldly cut leaves are held on stout, pink-purple stems, so look good when thrown into visual relief by low, hazy grasses. The flower spikes are a mass of yellow-green umbels. Monocarpic. **H** 2.4m. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** June to July. **HR** RHS H6.

### 64 *POLYGONUM SCOPARIUM*

The broom-like foliage of this perennial is spangled with long-lasting, small, white flowers over a long period. Tolerates dry and windy conditions A wiry plant that has a sophisticated beauty that improves with age. **H** 60cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** July to October. Evergreen.

### 65 *SALVIA CANDELABRUM*

A statuesque salvia that is worth hunting out for a spacious sunny spot. It takes its name from the long, thin stems that branch up and out like a candelabra and are adorned with blue-violet and white hooded blooms to create a hazy, blue fuzz at eye level. It forms a generous hummock of evergreen leaves that look like culinary sage. AGM. **H** 1.3m. **S** 60cm. **C** Sun, free-draining. **SI** July. **HR** RHS H3, USDA 8a-10b.

### 66 *SALVIA GLUTINOSA*

A sultry salvia that's invaluable for shady schemes. The gentle, sage-like, yellow flowers light up dark corners but it will also grow in the sun, making it a useful 'linking' plant in varied light conditions. **H** 1m. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained, or moist but well-drained soil; full sun or part shade. **SI** July and August. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 7a-9a.

### 67 *SANGUISORBA OFFICINALIS* 'RED THUNDER'

Taller and more ostentatious than its parent, our native meadow burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis*, but with the same tight bobble, wine-red flowers and finely cut foliage. Beautiful growing among meadow cranesbill or the veils of *Molinia* grasses. **H** 1.2m. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun or part shade. **SI** June to September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

### 68 *SCABIOSA COLUMBARIA* SUBSP. *OCHROLEUCA*

Pale, butter-yellow pincushion flowers are held on thin, wiry stems. Flowers profusely through the summer, bringing a fresh note of colour among the muted purples I plant it with. Suitable for smaller spaces and large containers. Deadhead to promote more flowers. **H** 45cm. **S** 45cm. **C** Well-drained soil; sun. **SI** June to September. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 3a-9b.

### 69 *SILENE FIMBRIATA*

Easily mistaken for a bladder campion with its large inflated calyx, this silene has fringed, white petals that give it a deceptively delicate look. In my garden I've planted it on a partially shaded dry bank where the detail of its pronounced profile can be seen among fine-textured grasses. **H** 75cm. **S** 23cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full or part shade. **SI** May and June. **HR** USDA 3a-9b.

### 70 *SYMPHYTUM* X *UPLANDICUM* 'MOORLAND HEATHER'

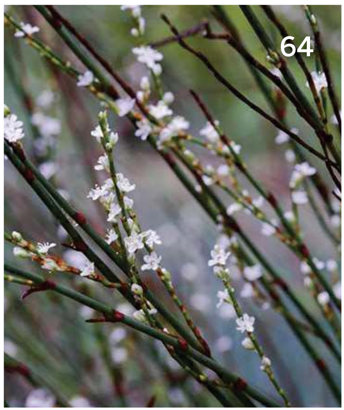
Rough textured leaves make the deep-purple, tubular flowers of this comfrey all the more charming. More refined and less vigorous than the common comfrey but still beloved by bees. Can repeat if cut back after flowering. **H** 2m. **C** Damp soil; part or full shade. **SI** April to June **HR** USDA 4a-9b.

### 71 *SYMPHYOTRICHUM TURBINELLUM*

An arching poise and widely spaced, single lavender-blue flowers distinguish this aster from traditionally stocky Michaelmas daisy cultivars. Native to dry prairies, this is a drought-tolerant species, as beautiful in gravel plantings as it is among grasses from its American homeland. **H** 1.2m. **S** 1m. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** September to October. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

### 72 *THALICTRUM* 'ELIN'

A towering meadow rue with glaucous, pinnate leaves and dark-purple stems; exquisite details against its airborne froth of tiny lilac flowers. Beautiful at all stages of growth. AGM. **H** 1.8m. **S** 90cm. **C** Well-drained soil; part to full shade. **SI** June to August. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 3a-7b. ▷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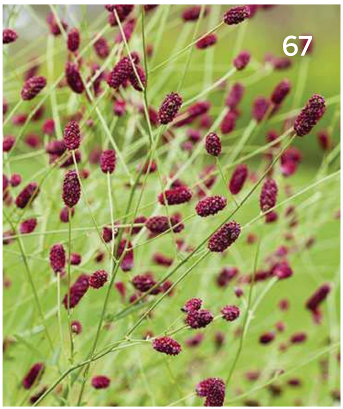
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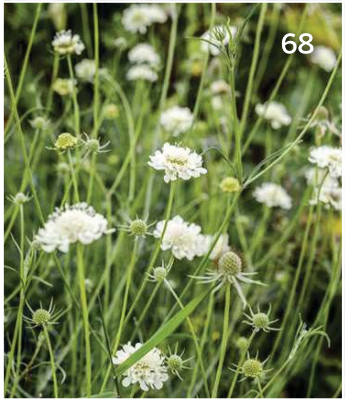
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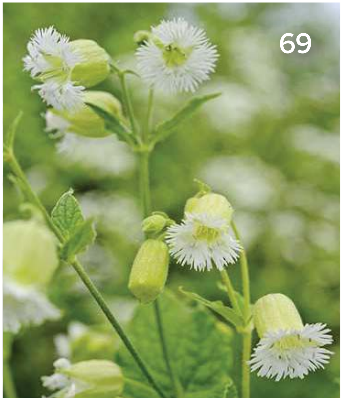
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55 ROBERT MABIC / GAP PHOTOS; 64 DIANNA JAZWINSKI / GAP PHOTOS; 67 RACHEL WARNE; 68 & 69 JASON INGRAM.

### ▷ 73 *TRICYRTIS FORMOSANA* 'DARK BEAUTY'

It's hard to resist the smouldering beauty of toad lilies' orchid-like flowers. They're all the more desirable because they bloom so late – and in the shade. This form has smoky-pink flowers speckled with maroon detailing that can only be appreciated up close. **H** 70cm. **S** 30cm. **C** Moist but well-drained, humus-rich soil; part or full shade. **SI** August to October. **HR** USDA 4a-9b.

### 74 *VERBENA OFFICINALIS* VAR. *GRANDIFLORA* 'BAMPTON'

Shimmering low clouds of tiny, mauve flowers are held on dark-purple stems for many weeks in summer. When grown from seed, it takes a couple of years for the plants to reach knee height and branch out into its mature form. Suited to a sunny, open spot where it can self-seed in gravel and you can appreciate looking through its delicate, see-through form. **H** 80cm. **S** 1m. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** Midsummer to autumn. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b.

## Shrubs and trees

### 75 *CORNUS MAS*

Clusters of bright-yellow, miniature blooms look dramatic against winter skies. Beautiful as a mature, spreading tree with mottle bark or as a young thicket fringing woodland. **H** 4m. **S** 4m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full to part shade. **SI** February. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

### 76 *CORYLUS AVELLANA*

A small, native tree that quickly regenerates whether coppiced, laid into a hedge or thinned. Its branches covered in long, yellow catkins are a special way of bringing spring inside. In autumn its bright, lime-yellow leaves illuminates surroundings. **H** 8m. **S** 8m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil, grows well in chalky soil; sun or part shade. **SI** December to February. **HR** RHS H6.

### 77 *CYDONIA OBLONGA*

The strong perfume of the quince's fruit is intensified when cooked; it will fill the whole of your home with fragrance. 'Bereczcki' or 'Leskovac' are top hardy choices. Prefers damp but not waterlogged ground. **H** 4m. **S** 4m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil in a sheltered position; full sun. **SI** Flowers in spring, fruits in September. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 4a-6b.

### 78 *DAPHNE BHOLUA* 'JACQUELINE POSTILL'

Evergreen leaves frame clusters of deep-pink buds and pale-pink flowers in late winter, when its delicious perfume hangs in the air. Needs shelter and is not reliable in exposed conditions. Hates being moved. AGM. **H** 1.8m. **S** 1.5m. **C** Moist but well-drained, fertile soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** February to March. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 7a-9b.

### 79 *EUONYMUS EUROPAEUS* 'RED CASCADE'

Native spindle turns a fiery red in autumn but its real charm comes later, when the leaves have fallen and the pink and orange winged fruit continue to decorate its branches. Grow in well-drained soil in full sun to part shade. AGM. **H** 4m. **S** 2.5m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** Autumn. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.

### 80 *MORUS NIGRA*

A sprawling tree, which when mature, is perfect for children to climb. The delicious taste of black mulberries and my hands stained red from picking them is an enduringly happy memory. **H** 12m. **S** 8m. **C** Humus-rich, fertile soil; full sun, sheltered from cold, dry winds. **SI** Flowers May to June; seeds ripen August to September. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

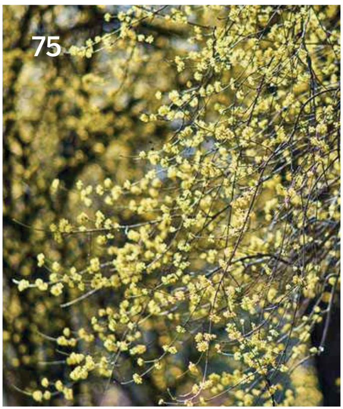
### 81 *MUEHLENBECKIA ASTONII*

A New Zealand native with a delicate tangle of wiry red branches and tiny, heart-shaped leaves that create an attractive cloud; a frothy hedge supported by many slender legs. Suited to London and coastal gardens. **H** 3m. **S** 3m. **C** Fertile, moist but well-drained soil, sheltered from cold, dry winds; full sun. **SI** Summer. **HR** RHS H3, USDA 7a-10b.

### 82 *NOTHOFAGUS ANTARCTICA*

Uncommon but hardy tree. Its small, glossy leaves, with a crinkled texture, change from green to glowing yellow tones in autumn. It's prone to lateral sprawling, which creates interesting, almost balletic contortions. **H** 12m. **S** 8m+. **C** Fertile, lime-free, moist but well-drained soil; full or part sun. **SI** Autumn. **HR** RHS H6,USDA 7a-10b. ▷

80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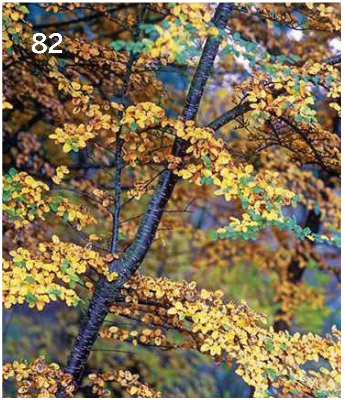
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75 SHAPENCOLOUR / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 76 JASON INGRAM; 79 AMOMENTINTIME / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 80 HOWARD RICE / GAP PHOTOS; 82 RICHARD BLOOMGAP PHOTOS.

*IT'S HARD TO RESIST THE SMOULDERING BEAUTY OF TOAD LILIES' ORCHID-LIKE FLOWERS – ALL THE MORE DESIRABLE BECAUSE THEY BLOOM SO LATE*

JASON INGRAM

▷ **83 *QUERCUS ROBUR***
Oaks are rapid growers and it's surprising how even a ten-year-old tree can command presence. What makes them so beautiful – their crevices, deeply fissured bark, spreading branches, soft leaves, acorns, open canopy – also contribute to their high biodiversity rating; they support more life forms than any other native tree. **H** 20-30m. **S** 8m+. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun or part shade. **SI** Deciduous (flowers April to May). **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

**84 *ROSA* X *ODORATA* 'BENGAL CRIMSON'**
An absolute favourite. Worth hunting down and waiting for the twiggy form to grow into a mature bush. The single flowers, are the most luxurious shade of pinky-red. Understated buds gently open into relaxed single flowers, each one with a slight twist. Grow in view of a window so you can see the blooms from June to December. **H** 2.5m. **S** 1.5m. **C** Fertile, moist but well-drained soil; full sun or part shade. **SI** June to August (repeat flowerer). **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5b-10b.

**85 *ROSA* 'STANWELL PERPETUAL'**
Timelessly romantic and deeply scented with ruffled flowers of pale pink, this rose was a favourite of the Victorians. It has an arching, non-suckering habit and repeat flowers. It has inherited the pinnate leaves, small thorns and resilience of its parent, *Rosa spinosissima*. **H** 1m. **S** 1.5m. **C** Moist but well-drained, fertile, humus-rich soil, in sheltered position; full sun. **SI** June to November (repeat flowerer). **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

*Bird's foot trefoil gently self-seeds around my garden brightening grass and gravel with clusters of yellow, pea-like flowers*

## Wildflowers

**86 *AGROSTEMMA GITHAGO***
Our native corncockle is making a comeback in wildflower seed mixes. Sow among low, light grasses so that you can appreciate the unfurling of its buds and the long, thin sepals arranged like a star around the flower. **H** 70cm. **S** 5m. **C** Well-drained, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** April to August. **HR** RHS H5.

**87 *CONOPODIUM MAJUS***
A dainty herb with finely divided leaves and white umbellifer flowers that repeatedly bloom. In my garden it enjoys a sloping bank where the soil does not remain waterlogged. **H** 25cm. **C** Well-draining soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** April to June. **HR** RHS H6.

**88 *CRAMBE MARITIMA***
Sea kale's puckered, glaucous-blue leaves, once dominated shingle shorelines, making it ideal for gravelly areas. Its wild, windswept companions – red valerian and sea campion – provide inspiration of what to plant it with in our gardens. **H** 60cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained to dry soil; full sun or part shade. **SI** May to July. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

**89 *DIANTHUS DELTOIDES* 'LUNEBURG HEATH MAIDEN PINK'**
Sweet, rosy-pink flowers flutter above a compact cushion of winter green foliage. Enjoys sunny, dry, well-drained positions making it a treasure for green roofs and rock gardens. **H** 20cm. **S** 25cm. **C** Dry, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** June to September. **HR** USDA 3a-8b.

**90 *ECHIUM VULGARE***
Clumps of brilliant-blue spires bloom continuously through the summer creating an architectural statement among informal plantings. Its small, trumpet-shaped flowers are pollinated by long-tongued insects, such as bees and butterflies. It's a grassland biennial, with roots that extend deep into the ground so suited to drought-prone land. **H** 1m. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** June to August. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

**91 *GALIUM VERUM***
Once used as a sweet-smelling filling for mattresses. I love the frothiness, of its honey-scented, primrose-yellow flowers and the way it creates bright patches in meadows. Will not thrive in very acid soils or hot climates. **H** 50cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; sun or part shade. **SI** July to August. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

**92 *GERANIUM PYRENAICUM* F. *ALBIFLORUM***
Wild geraniums have a delicate, sprawling habit that makes their small flowers appear to hang airily in unprepossessing spots. This

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84 HOWARD RICE / GAP PHOTOS - CAMBRIDGE BOTANIC GARDENS; 86 GILLIAN PLUMMER / GAP PHOTOS; 90 JULIE PIGULA / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 91 STEFFEN HAUSER / GARDEN WORLD IMAGES; 95 GARDEN WORLD IMAGES LTD / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO.

cranesbill, a close relation of the mauve-flowering hedgerow cranesbill, has white flowers that will add exquisite detail to a shady, overlooked nook. Will repeat flower in September if cut back after first flowering. **H** 30cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained, soil; full sun or part shade. **SI** June to July. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

**93 *LIGUSTICUM SCOTICUM***
Forms a neat clump of glossy, carefully sculpted, multi-loped leaves. Strong, purple stems support fresh, white umbels. Can tolerate coastal exposure. **H** 60cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist soil; full sun to full shade. **SI** June to August. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 4a-8b.

**94 *LOTUS CORNICULATUS***
Bird's foot trefoil gently self-seeds around my garden brightening grass and gravel with clusters of yellow, pea-like flowers. When planted alongside *Prunella vulgaris*, its procumbent growth makes it a drought-tolerant alternative to lawn. An invaluable food and nectar plant for the declining common blue butterfly. **H** 20cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** May to September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.

**95 *ONONIS SPINOSA***
En masse it creates an alluring pink haze; up close, the branches of this sub-shrub are covered with pretty, pink, butterfly-shaped flowers. Fast growing, and can grow in nutritionally poor soil. **H** 60cm. **C** Dry or moist soil; full sun. **SI** May to August. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.

**96 *PAPAVER CAMBRICUM***
The self-seeding Welsh poppy is always welcome in my garden. Its intense bursts of yellow and vermilion come and go through the summer months, appearing in unexpected places. It will grow in both sun and shade adding sparkle wherever it nestles. Sow successionally to start the flowering cycle. **H** 50cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil, in a sheltered position; part shade. **SI** June to July. **HR** RHS H6.

**97 *PULSATILLA VULGARIS***
A rare, native pasqueflower that makes a beautiful low detail in gravel. Bell-shaped, violet flowers bend upwards, revealing a yellow stamen-filled centre. Stems, buds and blooms are covered in long, silky hairs that catch sunlight. After flowering fluffy seedheads stand proud above filigree foliage, sometimes persisting for months. AGM. **H** 50cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** April to May. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 4a-8b.

**98 *RESEDA LUTEOLA***
Slender, pale-yellow spires that are best grown en masse to create hypnotic, swaying populations. A Mediterranean herb that is equally spectacular for cutting in generous bunches. Another invaluable food source in July and August for pollinators. Behaves as a biennial, self-sowing in an open patches of well-drained, gritty ground in the sun. Deadhead regularly to keep under control. **H** 1.35m. **S** 30cm. **C** Moist, rich soil; part sun. **SI** June to August. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b.

**99 *RHINANTHUS MINOR***
Yellow rattle is one of our most important meadow wildflowers; it looks unassuming yet it is a magical ingredient aiding flowering diversity. It is an hemiparasite; drawing water and minerals from adjacent grass, reducing its vigour, creating more opportunity for wildflowers to get a foothold. **H** 35cm. **S** 1m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** May to August. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.

**100 *SUCCISA PRATENSIS***
If happy will form dense colonies; its tight, spherical flowers held on leafless, wiry stems create a shimmering blue haze among grasses in areas of damp ground. Flowers late making it an important source of pollen and nectar at a time when these are in scarce supply. **H** 1m. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist soil; full sun or part shade. **SI** July to October. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b. □

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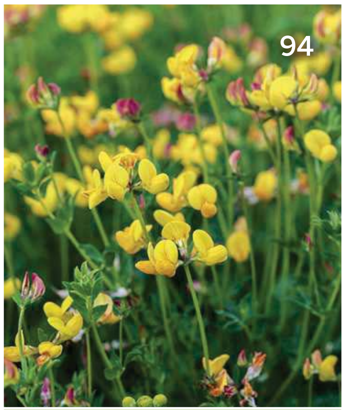
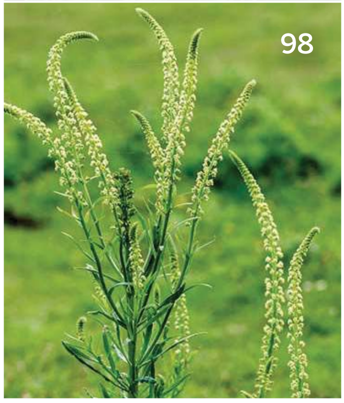
**Reader offer**
Readers can enjoy a 15 per cent discount on plants, bulbs and seeds and at Crocus (**crocus.co.uk**), which offers many of the plants chosen by Sarah. For details see page 111.

**About the author**
Sarah Price is one of the UK's most prominent garden designers who won worldwide recognition for her designs for the 2012 London Olympic Park. She is returning to Chelsea this year, after a five-year absence with a garden for M&G. Find out more at **sarahpricelandscapes.com**



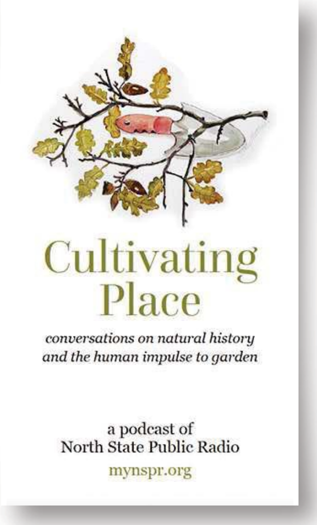


94 NICOLA STOCKEN / GAP PHOTOS; 96 S&O / GAP PHOTOS; 97 JOANNA KOSSAK / GAP PHOTOS; 98 PHILIP SMITH / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 100 JASON INGRAM.

# ONLY CONNECT

Whether you want to learn how to keep your houseplants alive, discover more about the National Trust's gardens or just enjoy some lively conversation while you're at work in the potting shed, there's a podcast for you. We recommend six of the best

WORDS ALYS HURN


Cultivating Place
conversations on natural history and the human impulse to garden
a podcast of North State Public Radio
mynspr.org

### CULTIVATING PLACE

**Average length**
50 minutes
**How often is it released**
Weekly
**Link**
cultivatingplace.com

Host Jennifer Jewell puts the culture back into horticulture and explores the different ways gardens and gardening have, and continue to have, an impact in a wider sense.

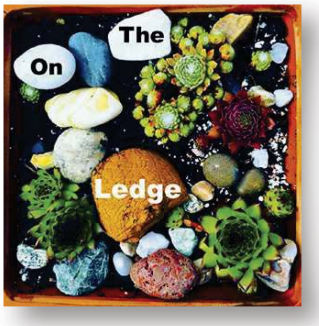
Have you ever taken the time to consider why you spend time cultivating the garden and exploring the gardens of others? Perhaps not to any great length, but for garden writer Jennifer Jewell, host of Cultivating Place, this question is at the heart of every conversation featured on her podcast.

Broadcast on public radio in California each week, its full title is Cultivating Place: conversations on natural history and the human impulse to garden, and it is based on two beliefs. The first is that horticulture is on a par with art, music, architecture, geography, history and literature and is a key part of our cultural literacy. The second is that gardens and gardening connect us to larger environments, both culturally and botanically.

On her website, Jewell writes: 'Gardens are both more and less versions of ourselves, our fingerprints, our signatures, our reflections, our legacies – as individuals and as cultures' and her weekly interviews explore the different ways gardening and gardens affect people.

The conversations are philosophical, rather than practical so if you're adverse to connecting to your emotions, it might not be the podcast for you, but the guests on Jewell's show are engaging and involved in interesting and inspiring projects. Speakers range from growers and gardeners to artists, scientists and naturalists. Designer Jinny Blom recently discussed why she made the career move from psychology to garden design and talked about her latest book *The Thoughtful Gardener*.

In a time where mindfulness is gaining traction, Cultivating Place seems very 'of the moment' but there is plenty to take away from this intriguing podcast and it's definitely worth a listen.



### ON THE LEDGE

**Average length**
40 minutes
**How often is it released**
Weekly
**Link**
janeperrone.com

Aside from the stylised Instagram shots of air plants and succulents, indoor plants have a lot to offer. This is the podcast to help you become a part of the houseplant revolution.

Freelance writer and previously garden editor at the *Guardian*, Jane Perrone has extensive horticultural knowledge and it makes her indoor gardening blog and podcast On the Ledge a must-listen.

Episodes cover a huge range of indoor plants, from trendy succulents and air plants to more exotic specimens. In the style of a horticultural agony aunt, Perrone answers her listeners' plant conundrums from floppy *Aloe vera* to yellowing *Monstera* leaves and gives advice and tips throughout the show on houseplant maintenance and care.

Episode 25 – covering watering, the nemesis of most beginner gardeners and an easy oversight by seasoned houseplant parents – is particularly useful. In just 20 minutes, you learn that a simple sports bottle with a small spout is more effective than the most stylish watering can and how tap water can be harmful to some plants, with recommended options on how to avoid its negative effects.

On the Ledge invites gardening personalities on to the show who have a particular interest or expertise in houseplants, such as garden writer and author of *Plant Love* Alys Fowler, and garden blogger Matthew Perry. Perrone also visits some of the best places to buy your houseplants and in episode 27 she gives her top tips for getting your houseplant home, safe and sound.

Plants for conservatories, balconies and bathroom shelves are all carefully considered, plus you'll find episodes dedicated to pests and diseases and finding the right pot for your plant. Perrone's fun, relaxed style of presenting allows you to take in her advice without being overwhelmed.

National Trust
National Trust Podcast

**NATIONAL TRUST**
**Average length**
15-30 minutes
**How often is it released**
Weekly
**Link**
nationaltrust.org.uk

A great source of inspiration. Explore some of the country's most historic gardens and wild landscapes and learn from the dedicated experts who love and manage them.

The National Trust Podcast offers an insight into gardens, walks and literary locations around the country.

The Garden Podcast series began in 2016 with host Alan Power, the head gardener at Stourhead, visiting some of the National Trust's most treasured gardens: Croome Court, Stourhead, Sissinghurst, Stowe, Mount Stewart and Cliveden. During his visits, he chats to the staff and volunteers who manage the garden and shares the historical impacts and hidden stories of these great estates.

Although the Garden Podcasts aren't the most recent series to be broadcast by the National Trust, the episodes are still available and it's worth going back and listening again. Don't miss 'Garden Cuttings', a collection of shorter clips offering expert gardening advice from some of the gardens featured in the series. Learn how to protect and manage pelargoniums from the walled garden at Stourhead and discover how the traditional method of scything has revitalised meadows and the wildlife population at Sissinghurst Castle in Kent.

If you're an avid walker on the lookout for new routes to explore, tune in to Walks of the National Trust hosted by ranger Kate Martin. Recorded on location, this podcast series delves into the myths, legends and history associated with each new landscape and Martin meets fellow ramblers who share their own experiences from the area.

Throughout the series you will journey through Kinder Scout, in the Peak District, the birthplace of the 'right to roam' movement, Beddgelert in Snowdonia and Formby in Liverpool, home to the red squirrel.

You can listen to all the National Trust Podcast's on iTunes, SoundCloud and Acast.

**GROWING WILD**
**Average length**
50 minutes
**How often is it released**
Monthly
**Link**
audioboom.com/channel/growing-wild

This is the perfect accompaniment to an afternoon on the allotment. It will help you appreciate the sun on your face and relish the feeling of your hands covered in dirt.

On the last Sunday of every month, it's worth tuning in to Growing Wild, a lifestyle podcast focused on promoting the joys of exploring the great outdoors.

Host Charlotte Petts won the Alan Titchmarsh New Talent Award for her work on the show at last year's Garden Media Guild Awards, the judges commending her 'original, rich content'.

Petts' relaxed but chatty style brings out the best from her guest speakers allowing them to share their stories and experiences without too much interruption. She visits allotments and community gardens and talks to a range of people dedicated to making the most of outdoor living, from wild swimmers to birdwatchers.

Petts also explores the environmental and social issues threatening some of our much-loved green spaces, such as budget cuts to city parks and the increase in plastic pollution, and includes interviews with individuals and organisations who are trying to make a difference.

Growing Wild is easy listening, and Petts plays snippets of music tracks to perfectly fit in to the theme of each episode, break-up the content of the show and give a witty twist to the topic of conversation, think Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell's *The Onion Song,* to liven up an episode on allotments. Download and listen for the perfect escape from a busy day at the office and it will encourage you to get out and explore, whether you live in the countryside or in a more urban environment.

Growing Wild is broadcast on RadioReverb, a not-for-profit radio station based in Brighton (97.2FM, DAB+ and radioreverb.com) at 5pm, and available as a podcast. You can also follow on Instagram and Twitter @growingwildfm.

The SodShow
GARDEN PODCAST
Every Friday | www.Sodshow.com | All Good Podcast Stores

**THE SODSHOW**
**Average length**
45 minutes
**How often is it released**
Weekly
**Link**
sodshow.com

If you love staying up to date with the latest news from the gardening world and listening to top designers and head gardeners chat about their work, this is the podcast for you.

Launched back in 2010, there are over 350 episodes of the SodShow available with Dublin-based Peter Donegan as its lively host.

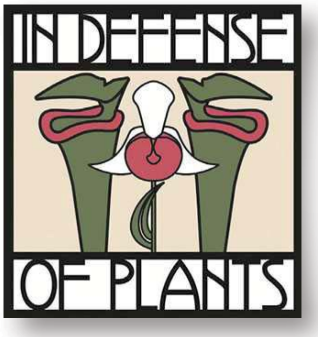
This is a podcast for the gardener who loves listening to a garden personality, as every episode of Donegan's show is a hotspot for a name drop. Designers, head gardeners and nurserymen have all featured on the show and it's a good place to find out about the latest garden projects, and hear all about upcoming plant fairs and gardening events.

A garden designer himself, Donegan is a familiar face in the garden industry and he quickly helps his guest speakers to feel at ease on his show, which results in a more insightful interview for the listener, and often return appearances from his guests.

He makes swift work of starting his interviews off, avoiding much of the filler chat often heard at the start of podcast episodes and he seems to have researched his guests and their work well, which helps conversation flow.

He regularly visits RHS shows, including RHS Chelsea Flower Show where he chats to garden designers and nurseries going for those coveted Gold medals. He has also broadcast from live events, both in the UK and overseas. Most recently from Salt Lake City where as the guest of US gardening brand, Thyme and Place, he was joined by gardening experts from around the USA for a series of gardening workshops on-air.

A new episode is available every Friday, and each one is packed with horticultural advice and fun facts. Donegan's charm and unfaltering energy makes for an enjoyable show that will help you to build on your gardening knowledge and keep you entertained while working in the potting shed.



**IN DEFENSE OF PLANTS**
**Average length**
40-60 minutes
**How often is it released**
Weekly
**Link**
indefenseofplants.com

If the state of the world is getting you down, tune in to In Defense of Plants and listen to the amazing ways people are working to protect and preserve our fragile environment.

Matt Candeias is on a mission to cure plant blindness. His podcast In Defense of Plants started in January 2015 as an additional element to his blog of the same name and now 141 episodes later, it has become a fascinating platform for sharing amazing evolutionary stories from the botanical world.

Stemming from a frustration with the way plants are only considered useful if they have an anthropocentric use, his podcast celebrates the importance of plants in their own right. For Candeias, plants are everything and he hopes, by listening to his podcast, people will be inspired to look at plants in a different way. "Plants are the backbone of every major ecosystem on the planet and we desperately need to give them the attention they deserve," he says.

Candeias regularly interviews specialists at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and botanists from all over the world to shine a light on the incredible work being done to aid and promote plant conservation. Whether you're a plant person or not, the topics covered in Candeias's podcast are wide ranging and cover subjects such as plant hunting in Papua New Guinea, ancient fossilised forests in Antarctica, plant poaching and plant pollinators.

As you would expect from a podcast dedicated to botany, many of the new plants discussed are referenced in Latin, and although it might leave you a little confused, you can't help but be drawn in to the expeditions and new discoveries featured on the show.

It's worth noting that 'the order of business' at the start of the show can drag on a bit but a free podcast relies on the support of its listeners and the main content is worth the wait.

Based in the USA, In Defense of Plants is broadcast every Sunday and is available on iTunes and at indefenseofplants.com

# A NOD TO THE IRISH

*Coosheen on the south coast of Ireland is a Mecca for snowdrop fans with a collection that emphasises the Irish cultivars*

WORDS **ANNIE GATTI** PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**

**This page** Long-flowering and easy to grow, the popular Irish snowdrop *Galanthus* 'Straffan', found in Co Kildare, stands out because of the brilliant whiteness of its flowers. Hester grows it beneath a weeping purple beech.

**Facing page** In the front garden a trio of *Betula jacquemontii* is underplanted with *Cyclamen hederifolium* and *Galanthus elwesii* 'Skyward' with *G.* 'Bowles Early' in the foreground.

## In brief

**Name** Coosheen.
**What** A plantswoman's garden of two halves.
**Where** Near Cork on the south coast of Ireland.
**Size** 1,240 square metres (about a third of an acre).
**Soil** Originally sticky marl, but improved throughout with grit and topsoil.
**Climate** Maritime, tempered by the Gulf Stream.
**Hardiness zone** USDA 8a-9b.

Coosheen, a garden on the edge of Cork city in the south of Ireland, is sheltered from the salty winds whipping off the Atlantic by a boundary of beech hedging. When Hester and Paddy Forde originally moved into the chalet house there, they inherited a few apple trees and some grass – level at the back and sloping at the front. Thirty years later, the two-part garden is a multi-layered plantsman's delight, where each plant has been selected for its form, colour or scent. Inspired by visits to the Dublin garden that formerly belonged to the author and horticulturist Helen Dillon, Hester combines bulbs with perennials, evergreens and grasses. Her passion for snowdrops has created a garden that draws you out, even on the coldest of winter days.

**Where did your passion for snowdrops come from?**
I visited snowdrop gardens with friends who are really keen on them, and started off with *Galanthus* 'S Arnott' and a few of the more common ones. Then I was given the Irish cultivar *G.* 'Cicely Hall', and I was taken. For me, snowdrops bring the winter garden to life – I so look forward to them every year.

**In your garden what conditions do snowdrops fare best in?**
Snowdrops need good drainage; I find loamy soil, with leafmould and plenty of grit added in, is best. But I do have to play around with the planting, because snowdrops don't always like where you put them. I've found that the yellows do best in our scree bed. If I get a bulb that's new to me, and it's expensive, I isolate it by growing it in a pond basket. That way, if I'm digging or planting later in the year, at least I hit the basket and not the bulb. I fill the basket with John Innes No. 2 or 3, with a bit of topsoil, grit and leafmould, and a sprinkle of bonemeal to give them a good start.

**Are there any snowdrops that cope with wetter ground?**
Everything drains down to the end of our front garden, so I don't put any choice snowdrops there. But I find that both *G. nivalis* and *G. nivalis* 'Viridapice' cope with the wetter conditions, and multiply well.

**How long a flowering season do you get?**
I start with the autumn-flowering 'Tilebarn Jamie', but the first winter one is 'Three Ships', which is nearly always in flower on Christmas Day. 'Castlegar', an Irish snowdrop, follows soon after, and my last to flower is usually 'Baxendale's Late', which can take me to the end of February.

**Any tips on how to plant snowdrops so that they look natural?**
I plant them in mixed groups of earlies and lates, which gives me a continuous show, among herbaceous plants, and I cull the vigorous ones every year, so that they don't take over. I also keep the cultivars separate from each other, so that they don't hybridise. The emerging foliage of brunneras and pulmonarias and some epimediums make a lovely foil for them, as do polypodium ferns and hellebores. *Leucojum vernum* and winter aconites make delightful companions for early snowdrops, as do *Narcissus* 'Jack Snipe' and Minicycla. □

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**USEFUL INFORMATION**
**Address** 15 Johnstown Park, Glounthaune, Cork, T45CC42, Ireland.
**Tel** +353 (0)86 865 4972.
**Website** hesterfordegarden.com
**Open** Coosheen is open on selected days during February. From May to September, the garden is open to groups, by appointment.

The 7th Snowdrop Gala, which Hester organises each year with Robert Miller, will take place on 3 February 2018 at Ballykealey Manor Hotel, Ballon, Co Carlow, Ireland. This year's speakers are Graham Gough and Jim Almond.

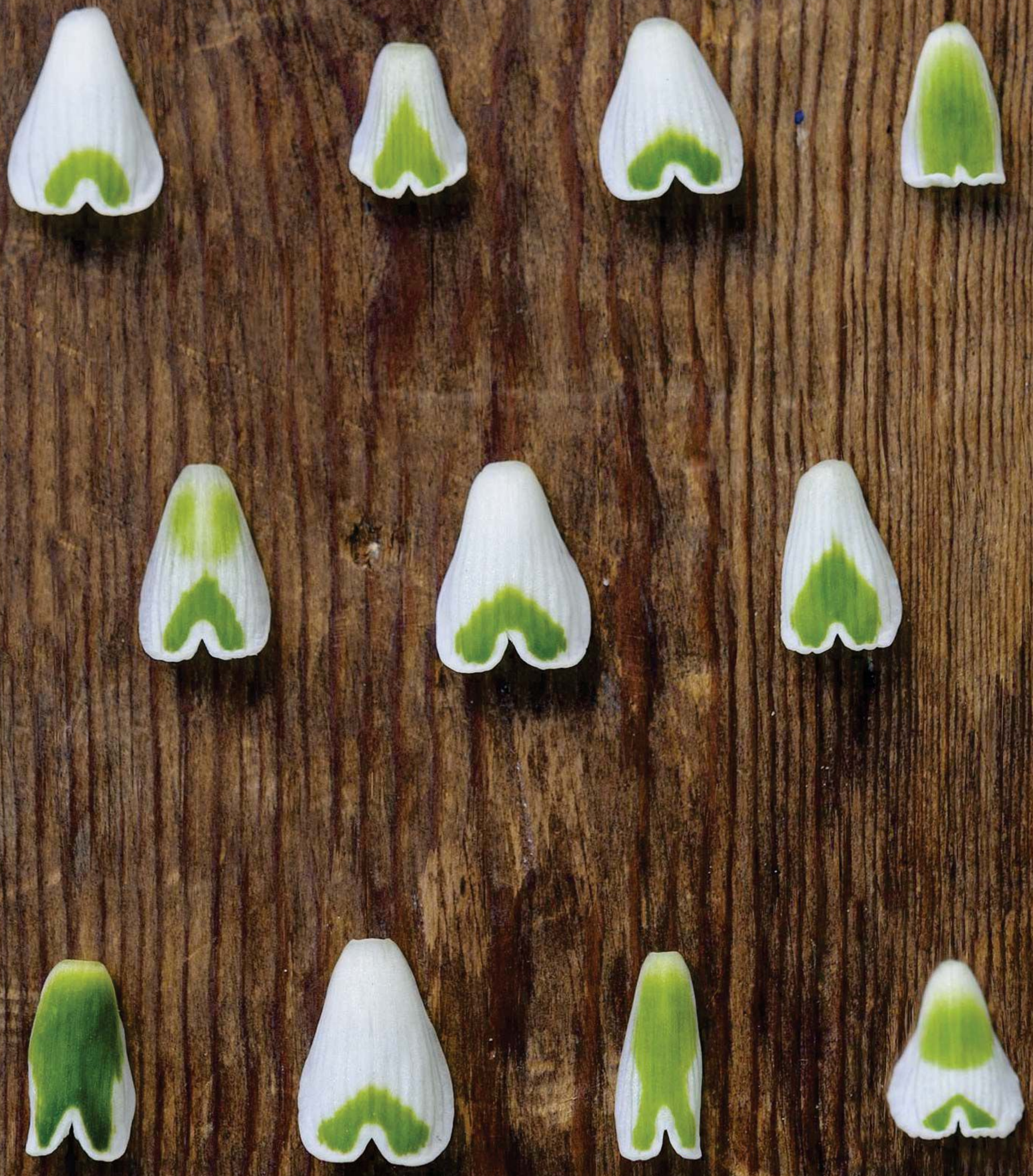
Turn the page for 20 of Hester's favourite snowdrops

**Images left from top**

**Top** Hester and Paddy created levels in the flat back garden by making a series of stone-edged raised beds, connected by informal paths and framed by a beech hedge. Hester uses several acers for their sculptural winter interest.

**Middle** Hester, who grew up on a farm and is a self-confessed plantaholic. Her gritty soil creates ideal conditions for bulbs.

**Bottom** The view across the far end of the back garden where epimediums and Woodwardia ferns create a green foil for snowdrops and other spring bulbs, such as *Leucojum aestivum* 'Gravetye Giant' seen growing beneath the *Fagus sylvatica* 'Purpurea Pendula' in the foreground.



## Irish cultivars

Snowdrop collecting in Ireland derived from naturally occurring hybrids found in gardens around the country. Once nurtured and bulked up, they were shared among passionate gardeners and it is only recently that many of them have become available commercially. Cicely Hall, who had a snowdrop named after her, amassed a noted collection that is now maintained by her son Robin at Primrose Hill Garden in Lucan, Co Dublin, while at Altamont Gardens, Co Carlow, Corona North enriched her collection with hybrids she collected from abandoned demesnes. Turn the page for details of these and other Irish snowdrops.

**Top row, from left to right**
*G.* 'Straffan'
*G.* 'Hill Poë'
*G.* 'Brenda Troyle'
*G. ikariae* 'Emerald Isle'

**Middle row**
*G. plicatus* 'Woodtown'
*G.* 'Waverley' seedling
*G.* 'Mark's Tall'

**Bottom row**
*G.* 'Cicely Hall'
*G.* 'Blaris'
*G.* 'Waverley Aristocrat'
*G.* 'Green Lantern'

# *12 IRISH SNOWDROPS*

**1 *Galanthus* 'Straffan'**
Also known as 'The O'Mahoney' this tall Irish snowdrop has chunky flowers with grooves on the inner segments. Reliable once settled. 25cm. AGM*.

**2 *G.* 'Hill Poë'**
This pinnate Irish double, with five outer petals, was found growing under a walnut tree at Riverston, Co Tipperary in 1911 by James Hill Poë. It needs good drainage and flowers late in the season. 14cm.

**3 *G.* 'Brenda Troyle'**
This early-flowering hybrid, with a broad inverted 'V' at the apex, was found on the Acton family estate in Co Wicklow. It has large, rounded flowers, a honey scent and grey-blue leaves. 20cm.

**4 *G. ikariae* 'Emerald Isle'**
This Irish snowdrop has broad, green markings on the outer segments and is almost entirely green on the inner segments. It was found in 1986 by Megan Morris at Drew's Court, Co Limerick. 18cm.

**5 *G. plicatus* 'Woodtown'**
This Irish snowdrop, with large rounded flowers and erect to arching, blue-green leaves, was raised by Oliver Schurmann of Mount Venus Nursery. 16-20cm.

**6 *G.* 'Waverley' seedling**
This Irish cultivar is a tall, mid-season snowdrop. A vigorous grower, as good as its parent 'Waverley Aristocrat'. 18-20cm.

**7 *G.* 'Kildare'**
This large-flowered snowdrop, which often has two scapes, has beautiful green stripes on the outer petals. 24cm.

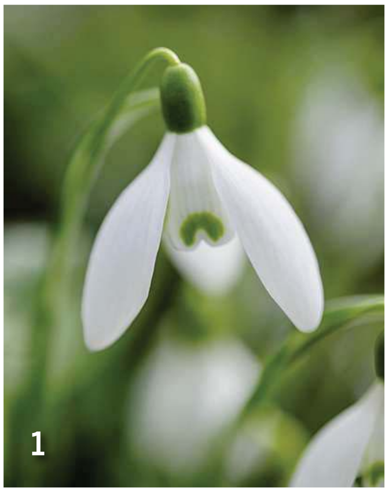
**8 *G.* 'Mark's Tall'**
Found by Mark Smyth in Northern Ireland, this tall snowdrop is a cross between *nivalis* and *plicatus* species. Flowers prolifically in January and February. 35cm.

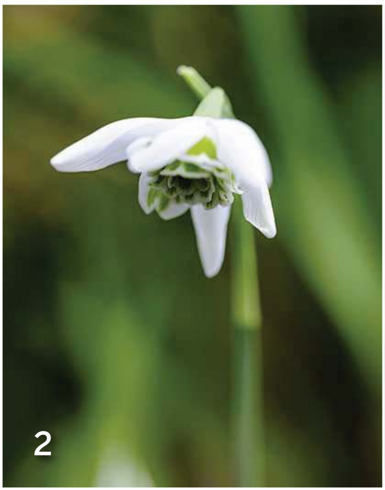
**9 *G.* 'Cicely Hall'**
This outstanding, robust Irish cultivar has dark-green inner markings and the largest sinus (notch at the tip of the tepal) of any cultivar. It was found at Primrose Hill, Lucan, where it was nicknamed The Stalker. 20-25cm.

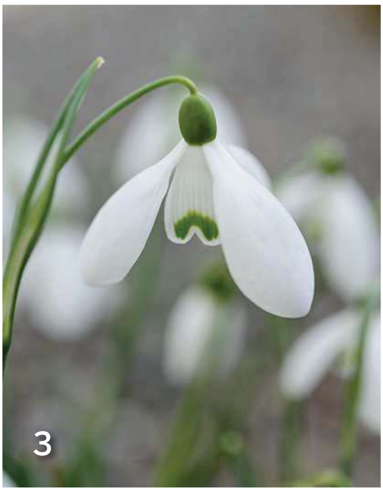
**10 *G.* 'Blaris'**
With chunky, rounded flowers this Irish snowdrop is a really good doer, flowering in February and March. 18cm.

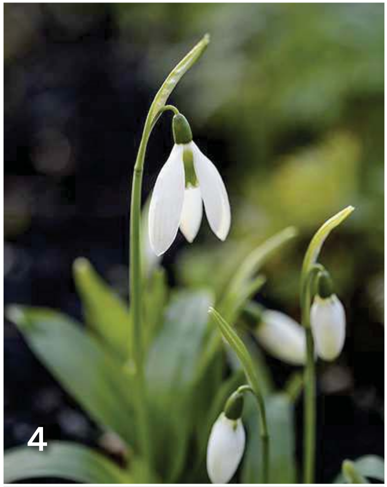
**11 *G.* 'Waverley Aristocrat'**
Raised by Harold McBride in Co Down, this snowdrop has long, slender outer segments and a broad green mark on the inner segment. It often produces two scapes (flower stalks). Flowers February to March. 16-20cm.

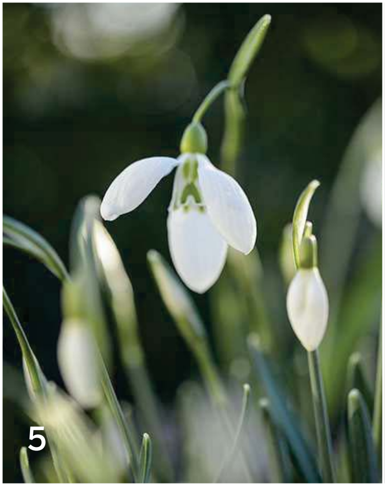
**12 *G.* 'Green Lantern'**
This snowdrop, with well-shaped flowers, has a broad inverted 'V' on the inner segments. It bulks up well. 18cm.

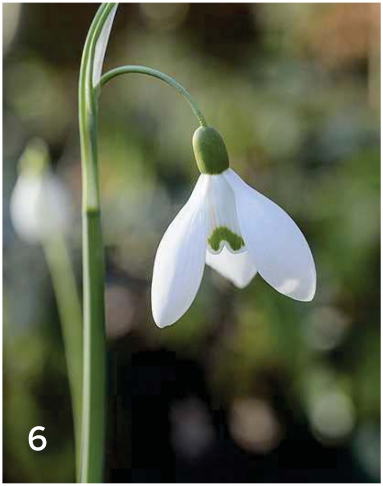


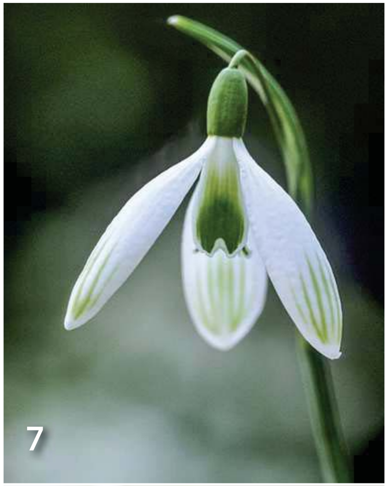


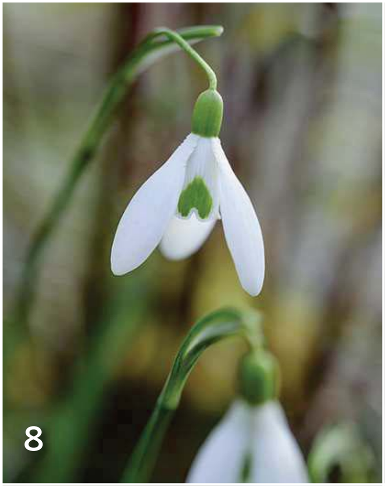


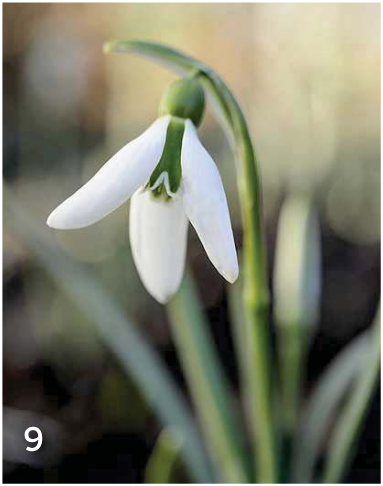


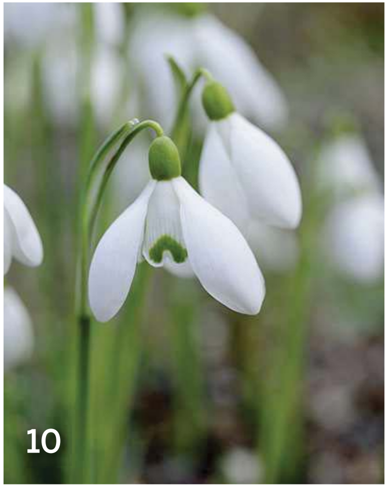


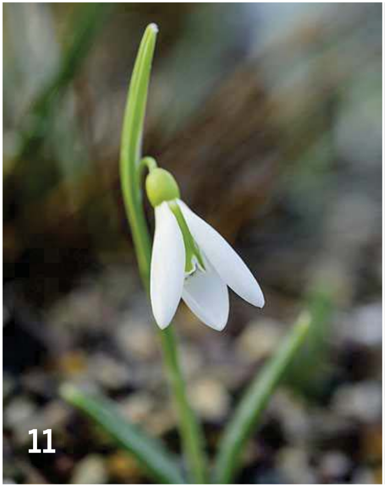


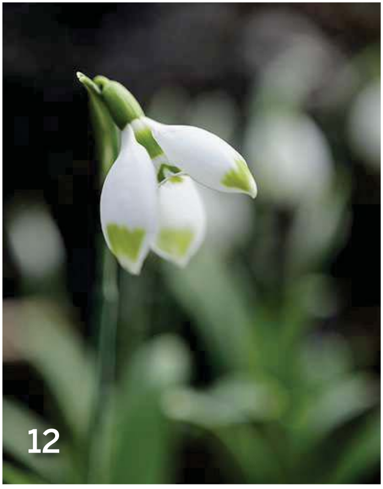




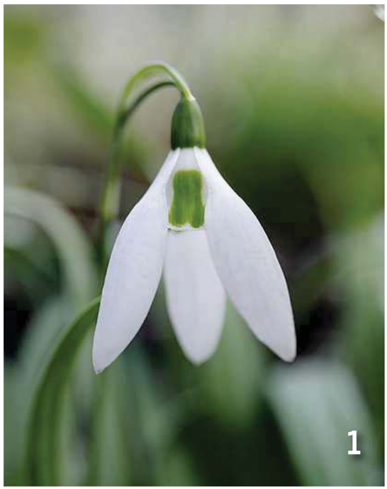








7 JONATHAN BUCKLEY / GAP PHOTOS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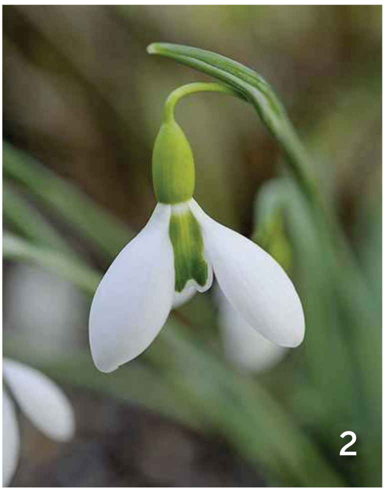
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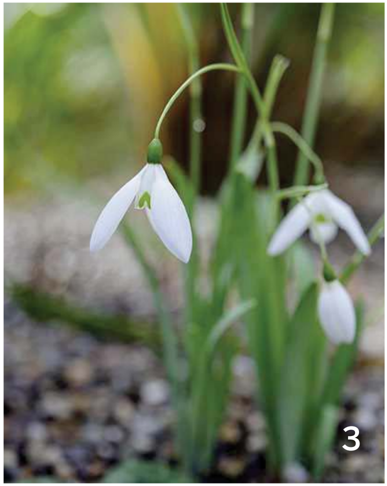
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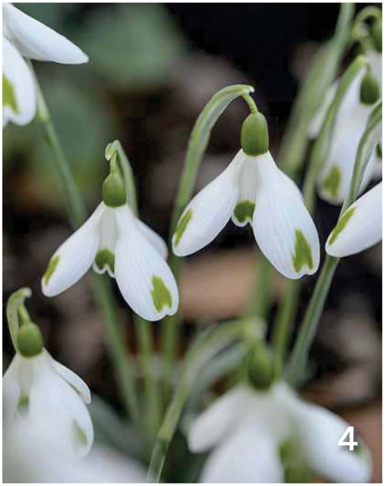
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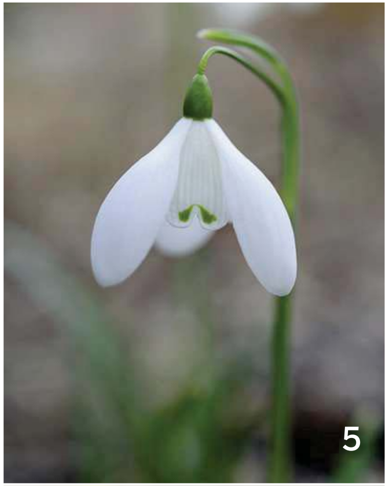
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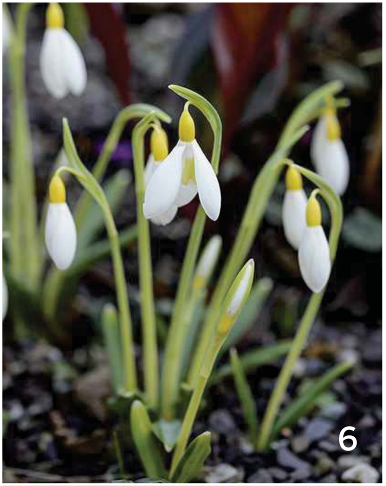
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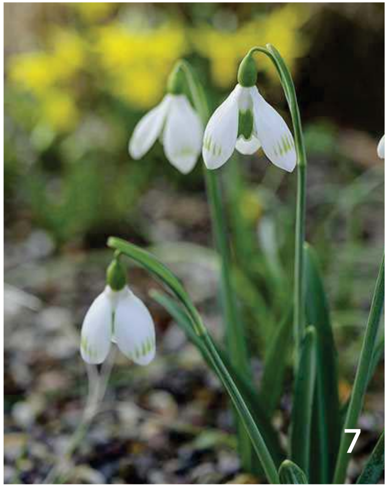
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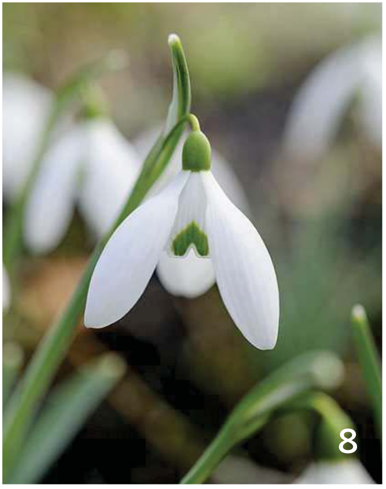
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# *8 BRITISH SNOWDROPS*

**1 *G.* 'Margaret Owen'**
Hester loves the elegant flowers of this hybrid, which was named for the English galanthophile Margaret Owen. She bought this at one of Margaret's famed snowdrop lunches, held annually at her garden, The Patch in Shropshire, to coincide with the end of the flowering season. The lunch would be followed by an open day and sale. 28cm.

**2 *G.* 'Erway'**
This mid-season snowdrop, which often makes two scapes per bulb, is easy to recognise from a distance because of its long, olive-green ovary. 16cm.

**3 *G.* 'Fly Fishing'**
This early-flowering snowdrop, found by Avon Bulbs, is named for its long pedicel (or flower stem), which suggests a fishing line. It has an exceptionally long scape and upright spathe (the green bract that originally enclosed the flower bud). 20cm.

**4 *G.* 'Trumps'**
A vigorous seedling from *G. plicatus* 'Trym', inheriting bold green markings on the outer segments, soon forming a conspicuous clump in the garden. 16cm. AGM.

**5 *G.* 'Mrs Thompson'**
A robust hybrid that has a tendency to throw two flowers from separate pedicels, on the same scape. 18-20cm.

**6 *G. plicatus* 'Wendy's Gold'**
This *plicatus* cultivar has a vivid-yellow ovary and pedicel, and bulks up well when grown in good light. It flowers in Hester's gravel area in February. 15cm.

**7 *G.* 'Sprite'**
This Avon Bulbs snowdrop has fine green lines on the outer petals and all-green inner ones. It flowers in February at in Hester's garden. 15cm.

**8 G. 'Seagull'**
A honey-scented snowdrop with chunky flowers and broad, semi-erect leaves. It often produces two flowers per bulb. 23cm.

- Hardiness rating for all snowdrops: RHS H5, USDA 3a-7b.

## Recommended reading

*Snowdrops* by Gunter Waldorf (Frances Lincoln, 2012). *Snowdrops: A Monograph of Cultivated Galanthus* by Matt Bishop, Aaron Davis and John Grimshaw (Griffin Press, 2006).

## Buying bulbs

- If possible, feel the bulb to make sure it's firm, not soft. If you are buying bulbs in the green, check that the leaves are clean – streaks can be a sign of virus. Hester prefers to plant snowdrops in the green, but if you do plant in autumn, buy your bulbs from a reliable grower or nursery.

## Where to buy Irish cultivars

- Robert Miller of Altamont Plant Sales, Altamont Gardens, Ballon, Co Carlow, Ireland has a good selection. As part of the annual Snowdrop Gala and Other Spring Treasures day, the nursery hosts a sale of a wide selection of snowdrops, both Irish and British. Tel +353 (0)87 982 2135, sales@altamontplants.com
- Angela Jupe, at Bellefield House and Gardens, Shrinrone, Birr, Co Offaly, Ireland. Holds one of the largest snowdrop collections in Ireland. Tel + 353 (0)86 600 2180, angelajupe@gmail.com

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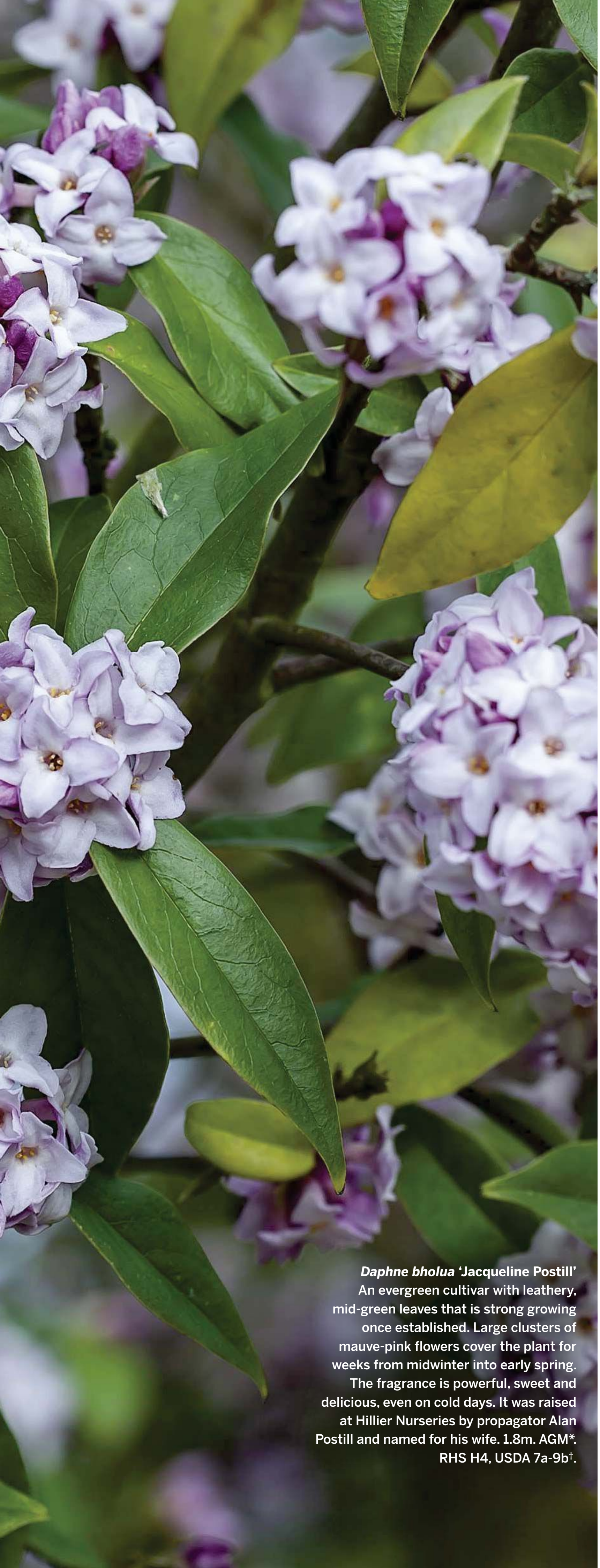
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.

# DAPHNE

*Flowering throughout the year, and notably during colder weather, the recurring theme of daphnes is scent*

WORDS **ANDY McINDOE** PHOTOGRAPHS **DIANNA JAZWINSKI**



***Daphne bholua* 'Jacqueline Postill'** An evergreen cultivar with leathery, mid-green leaves that is strong growing once established. Large clusters of mauve-pink flowers cover the plant for weeks from midwinter into early spring. The fragrance is powerful, sweet and delicious, even on cold days. It was raised at Hillier Nurseries by propagator Alan Postill and named for his wife. 1.8m. AGM*. RHS H4, USDA 7a-9b†.

JULIAN WINSLOW

**Andy McIndoe** is a horticulturist and author with a special interest in trees and shrubs. He has been responsible for 25 gold-medal winning exhibits at RHS Chelsea Flower Shows.

Many gardeners love plants that are a challenge, both to grow and to source. I remember one keen plantsman telling me that half the enjoyment of any plant is in the chase to find it. During my early days at Hillier Nurseries, daphnes must have been the most requested shrubs, but they were never available. Their scarcity undoubtedly fuelled their demand. What was all the fuss about? A question soon answered with just a hint of that intoxicating fragrance.

*Daphne bholua* 'Jacqueline Postill' was raised by Hillier propagator Alan Postill and is the best known and most enduring plant raised at the Hampshire nursery. Its heady, sweet fragrance fills the Winter Garden at the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens from early January right through to March. Once experienced, it is never forgotten, so I planted three in our garden at Sandhill Farm as soon as we moved here 17 years ago. Despite our rather dry, sandy soil the plants have thrived and delight every season. A day in late winter spent in their presence kick-starts the gardening year. Pick a few sprigs for the house and they fade quickly, their fragrance is just not for capture. It needs to be free on the cool, outdoor air.

My first encounter with these elusive shrubs was a *Daphne mezereum*, the species most available when I was a boy. I remember a spindly, unhappy shrub that redeemed itself each New Year when a few purple buds opened to be worshipped for their scent. Undoubtedly, it was a poor ▷

## PLANT PROFILE

**What** Deciduous or evergreen shrubs, most with highly fragrant flowers.
**Origins** Europe, Asia and North Africa. Many cultivars are of garden origin.
**Season** Winter-, spring- and summer-flowering species and cultivars. Those that flower in winter are the best known.
**Hardiness** Garden hardy, RHS H4-6 and USDA 4a-9b depending on species or cultivar.
**Size** Dwarf- to medium-sized shrubs from 45cm to 2.4m in height.
**Conditions** Sheltered situation on reasonably moist neutral to alkaline soil, with some exceptions. Most prefer partial shade and dislike hot, dry situations.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.

▷ specimen planted in the wrong place; but it was desirable nonetheless. Years later I was amazed to find how easily it is grown on the chalk soils of the Itchen Valley, near Winchester, Hampshire. Sprigs of it appear regularly with hellebores and snowdrops on the 'plants of interest' table at our local horticultural society meetings.

The daphne I grow the most, in a variety of situations, is *D. odora* 'Aureomarginata'. I planted two in our previous garden. One a medium-sized specimen purchased at considerable expense, the other a rooted cutting acquired at a Women's Institute market for a couple of pounds. The latter thrived and made a substantial shrub, while the other faded in a few years. The lesson: daphnes hate being confined to a pot and they hate disturbance, especially later in life. Recently, I saw dozens of *D. odora* 'Aureomarginata' being used in an amenity planting scheme outside offices in Southampton's city centre. This is just not the way to use this shrub. It is not suited to mass planting or lack of care and will never deliver the desired effect.

I have *D. odora* Rebecca (= 'Hewreb') growing in quite a dry spot under a large pittosporum outside the study window. It grows surrounded by *Hakonechloa macra* 'Aureola' and *Geranium macrorrhizum*. I judged its chances of success as minimal, however, it is healthy, happy and flowers well.

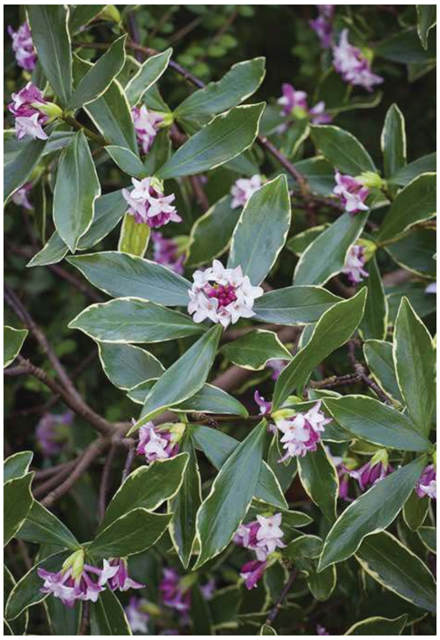
The fragrance of *D.* x *transatlantica* Eternal Fragrance (= 'Blafra') is sometimes described as disappointing, but that has not prevented me from planting it. I have yet to be overpowered by the scent, but I am impressed by its ability to flower for a long time. Any small, evergreen shrub that flowers for months, rather than weeks has to be good news for a small garden.

Temperamental daphnes, such as *D. cneorum* and *D. arbuscula*, are probably best admired by most of us in the alpine house at RHS Wisley, rather than seen struggling in our gardens. These are plants for the dedicated. When you see these incredible little shrubs in flower with such powerful fragrance it is humbling to see the efforts they make to attract pollinating insects.

For those of us bewitched by the magical power of their fragrance, daphnes are impossible to resist. They may not be the most robust garden plants, and they may make you work to meet their demands, but your senses will convince you they are worth it.

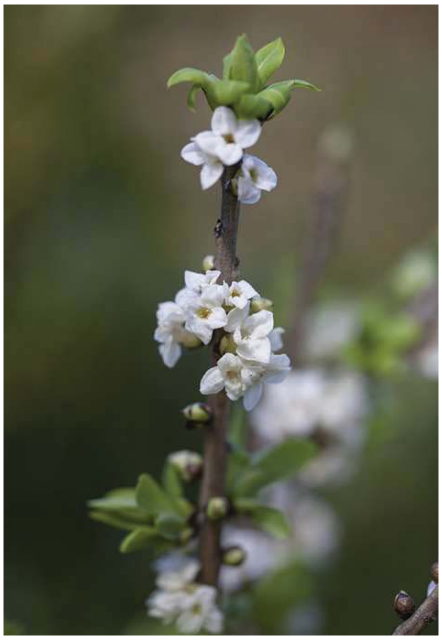
• Andy's recommendations for daphnes continue over the next six pages.

## Winter flowering

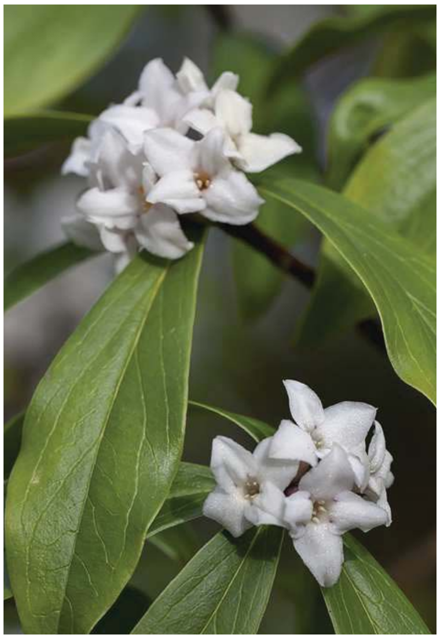


JONATHAN BUCKLEY / GAP PHOTOS

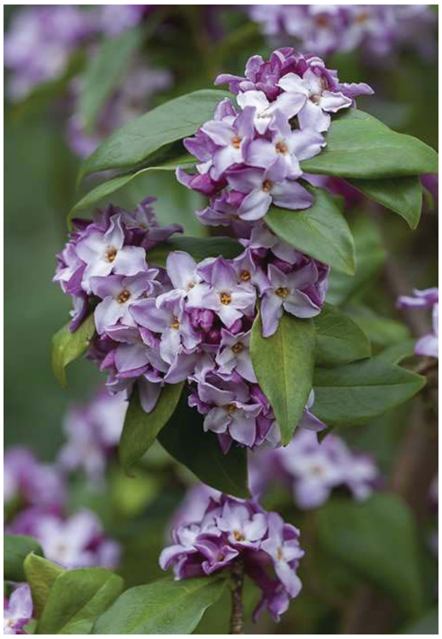
***Daphne odora* 'Aureomarginata'**
A compact, evergreen shrub with narrow, oval, leathery green leaves, finely edged with gold. More vigorous than the plain-leaved species. Fragrant flowers appear in winter and early spring, dark, purple-pink in bud, opening paler. 1m. RHS H4, USDA 7a-9b.



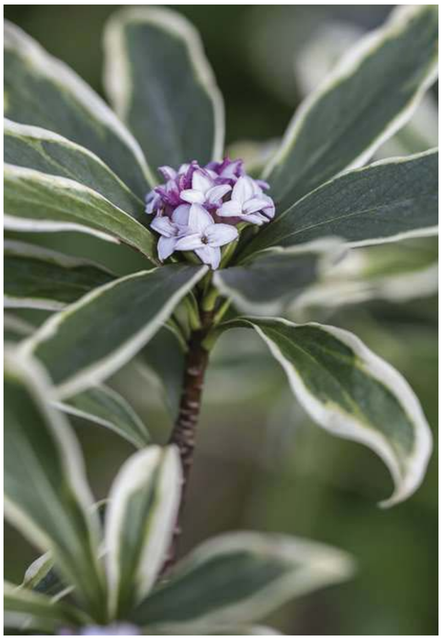
***D. mezereum* f. *alba***
A deciduous shrub with upright stems and small, narrow green leaves. The starry, highly fragrant flowers cluster on stems in winter before the leaves appear, and are often followed by yellowish berries. Needs chalk soil to thrive. 90cm. RHS H4, USDA 4a-7b.



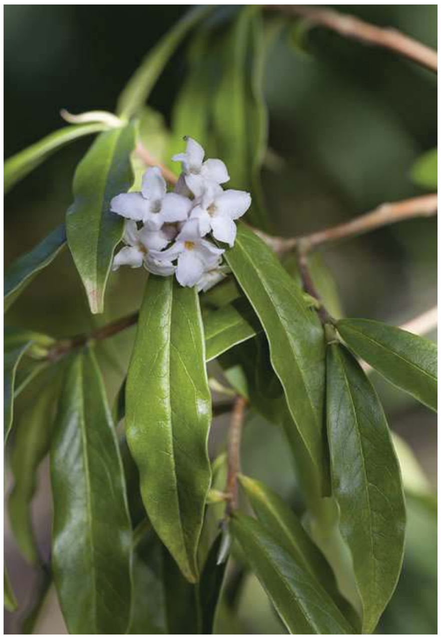
***D. bholua* 'Spring Herald'**
Clusters of deliciously fragrant, creamy-white flowers open at the tips of the shoots from pale-pink buds in late winter. Bushy and rounded in habit, it is semi-evergreen and loses foliage in cold weather. 1.8m. RHS H4, USDA 7a-9b.



***D. bholua* 'Peter Smithers'**
An evergreen or semi-evergreen shrub. In midwinter, clusters of deep, purple-pink buds open to paler blooms, which then become darker with age. Selected at RHS Wakehurst Place from seed Sir Peter Smithers collected in Nepal. 1.8m. RHS H4, USDA 7a-9b.

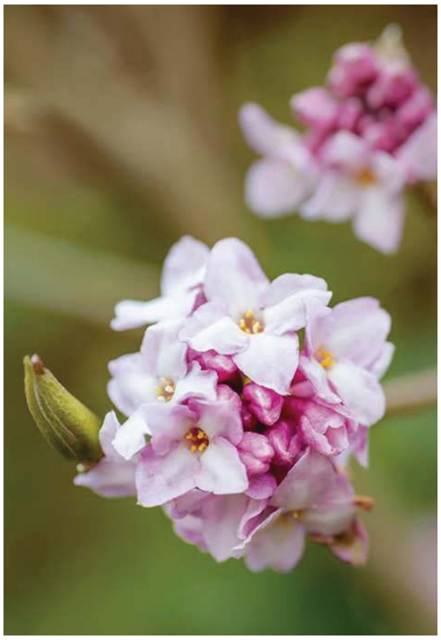


***D. odora* Rebecca (= 'Hewreb')**
A surprisingly robust form of *D. odora* with green leaves, boldly edged with creamy gold. A showy foliage plant it has the bonus of fragrant winter flowers. A better garden plant than previous cultivars with a similar variegation. 1m. RHS H4, USDA 7a-9b.

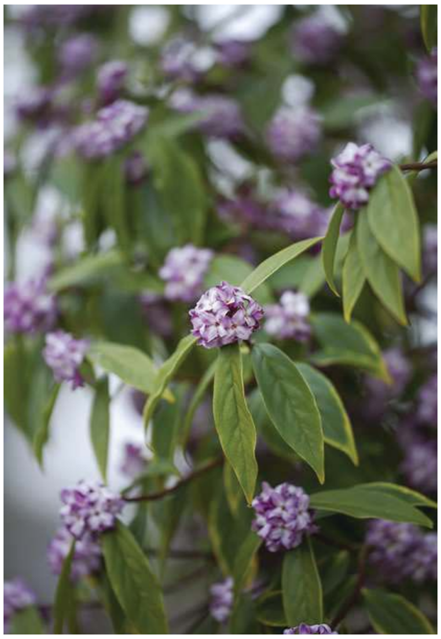


***D. bholua* 'Darjeeling'**
A semi-evergreen shrub with tan-coloured stems and pointed mid-green leaves. Clusters of fragrant, pale-pink flowers, which fade to white, appear from early winter. The original was raised at RHS Wisley from seed collected in Darjeeling. 1.8m. RHS H4, USDA 7a-9b.

GARDEN WORLD IMAGES LTD / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

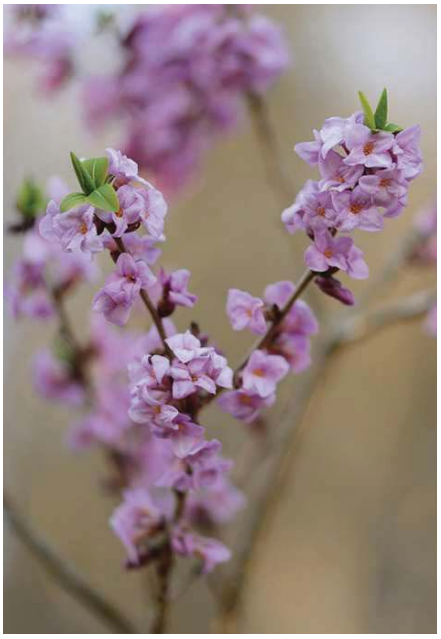


***D. bholua* var. *glacialis* 'Gurkha'**
A hardy, deciduous daphne; upright and vigorous with flexible tan-coloured stems. Clusters of richly scented, purplish-pink flowers appear at the tips of the shoots from late winter into early spring. 1.8m. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 7a-9b.



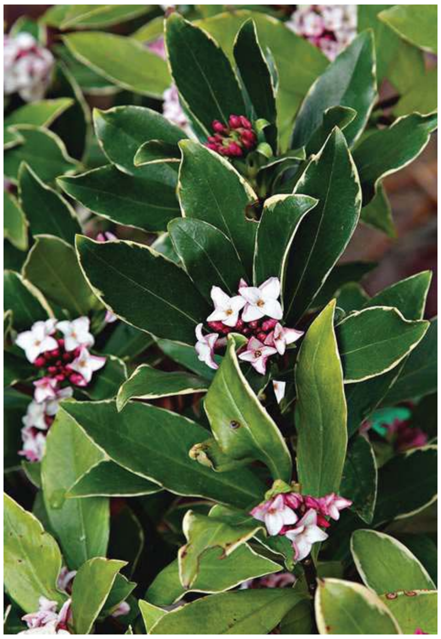
***D. bholua* 'Limpsfield'**
Rich purple-pink flower edges merge into white faces Blooming from midwinter and heavily fragrant, it is a good evergreen shrub to grow close to the house in a sheltered position. 1.8m. RHS H4, USDA 7a-9b.

MAURITIUS IMAGES GMBH / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



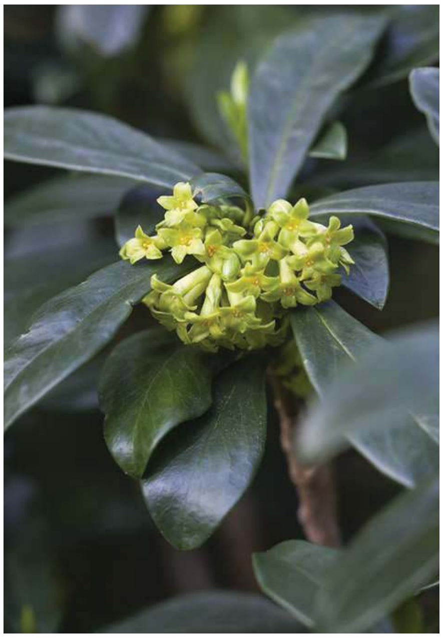
***D. mezereum***
A small shrub with deep-purple flowers, followed by scarlet berries, on shoots produced the previous season. Avoid large, imported stock and plant small, seed-raised plants if possible. Only grows well on chalk. 90cm. RHS H4, USDA 4a-7b.

REX MAY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

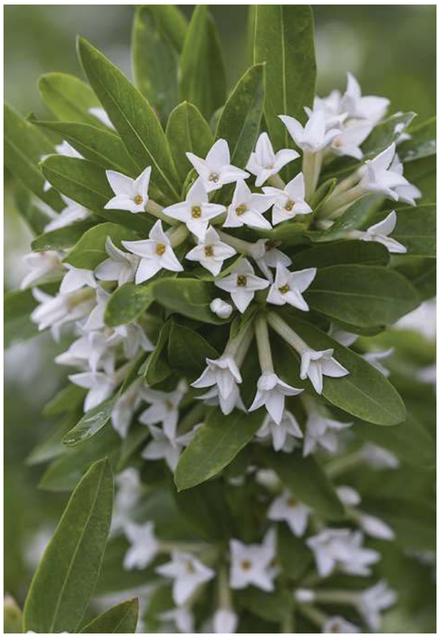


***D. odora* 'Walberton'**
A sport of *D. odora* 'Aureomarginata' with larger flower clusters; pale pink opening from red-pink buds and sweetly fragrant. The dark-green leaves are edged with creamy gold. An excellent evergreen to grow in semi-shade. 1m. RHS H4, USDA 7a-9b.

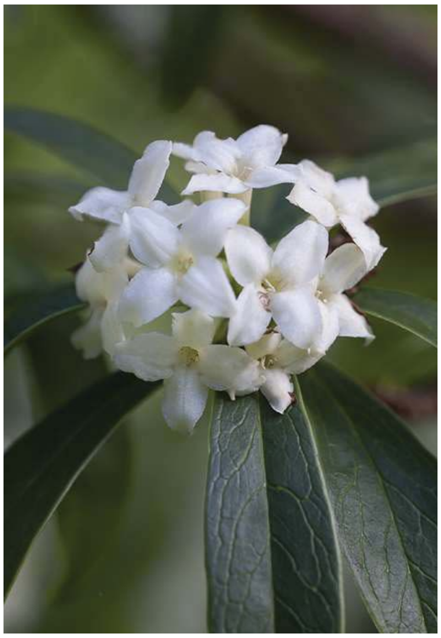
## Spring and summer flowering



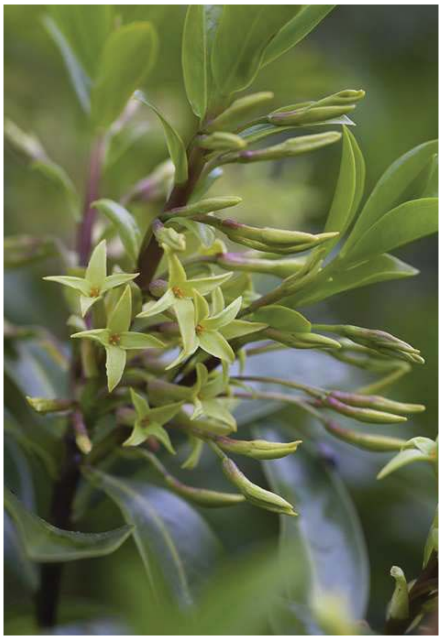
***D. laureola***
This British native is a small, bushy, evergreen shrub, ideal for a shady situation. Its fragrant, yellow-green flowers, produced in early spring, are partly concealed beneath the glossy, dark-green leaves. The flowers are followed by black berries. 60cm. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.



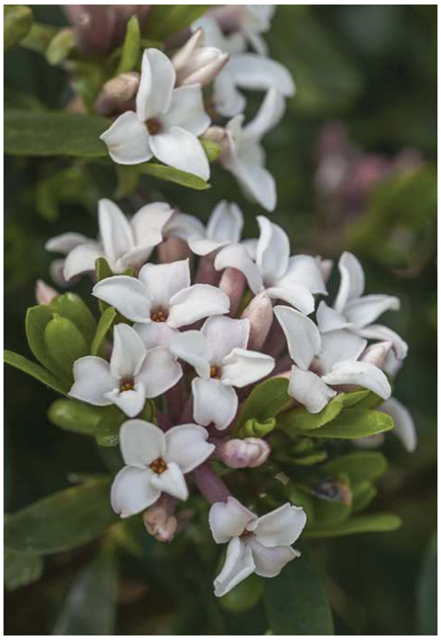
***D. caucasica***
Small, deciduous shrub, which blooms from late spring well into summer, sometimes into autumn. The clusters of white flowers are fragrant and often followed by yellow fruits. Best grown in dappled shade on moist, acid soil. 1.2m. RHS H5, USDA 4a-8b.



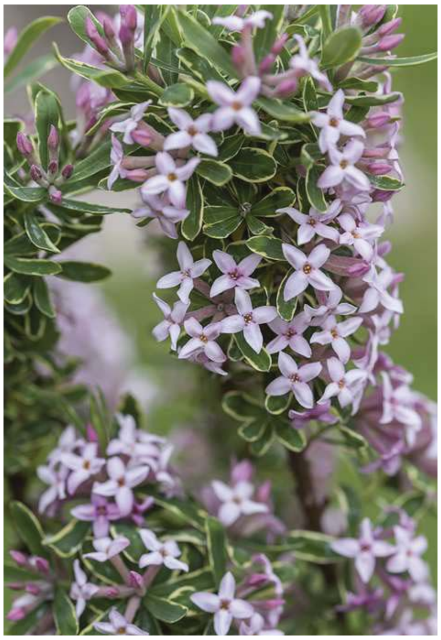
***D. acutiloba* 'Fragrant Cloud'**
A domed shrub with dark-green leaves and dark stems. The clusters of relatively large white flowers appear at the tips of the shoots in mid-spring; the fragrance is intoxicating. Red berries often follow the flowers. 1.2m. RHS H4, USDA 8a-9b.



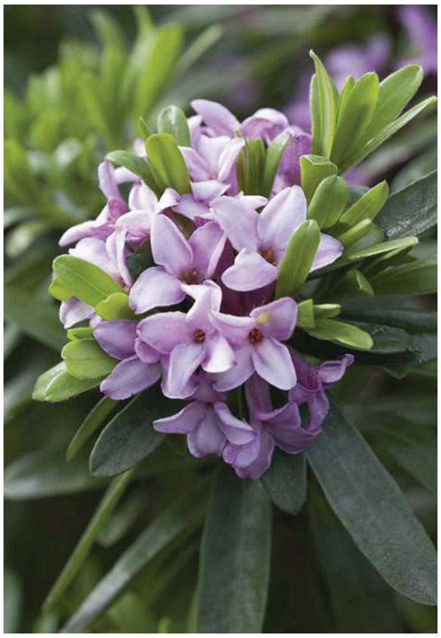
***D. pontica***
A small, spreading, evergreen shrub that is happiest under the light shade of trees and tolerant of heavy clay soils. Glossy green leaves show off the large clusters of fragrant, yellow-green flowers that are produced freely in late spring. 60cm. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.



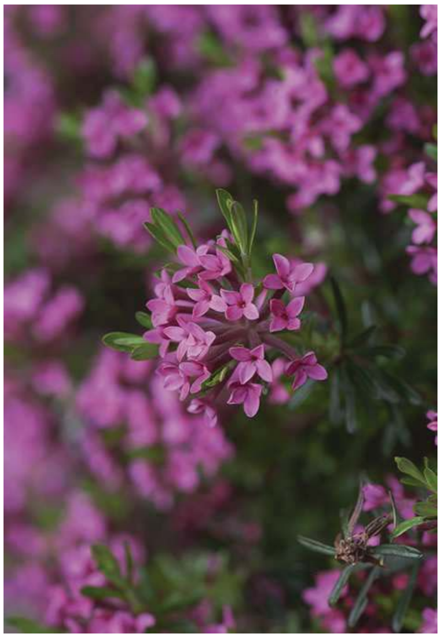
***Daphne* x *transatlantica* Eternal Fragrance (= 'Blafra')**
A compact, evergreen shrub with small, narrow leaves. Clusters of blush flowers appear at the tips of the shoots from mid spring. A good plant for a sheltered narrow border. 60cm. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.



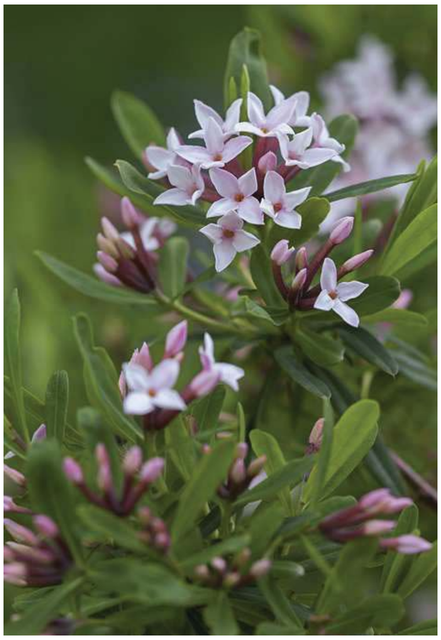
***D.* x *burkwoodii* 'Astrid'**
A rounded, bushy shrub with narrow, blue-green leaves finely edged with creamy yellow. Clusters of fragrant, pink flowers, appear from late spring through to midsummer. A good shrub for foliage interest. 60cm. RHS H4, USDA 5a-8b.



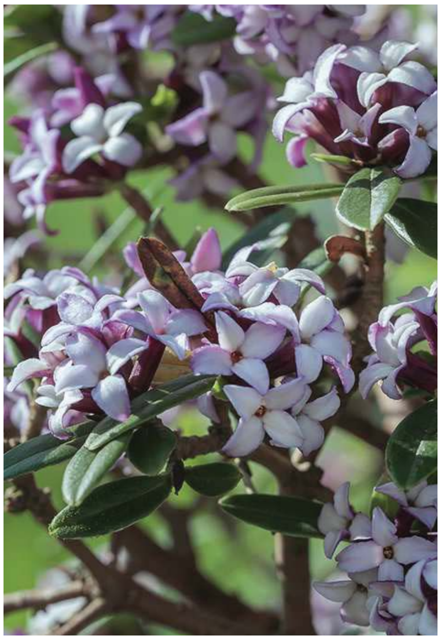
**Daphne x transatlantica Pink Fragrance (= ‘Blapink’)**
Similar to Eternal Fragrance, but with pink flowers flushed with white. Evergreen and compact in habit, it is ideal for a small garden and grows on both acid and alkaline soils. 60cm. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.



***D. cneorum***
A dwarf shrub with prostrate branches and narrow evergreen leaves. The large clusters of sweetly fragrant, pink flowers appear in mid to late spring. Often tricky to establish, it needs a sheltered, open situation on chalk soil. 15cm. RHS H5, USDA 4a-9b.



**D. x burkwoodii ‘Lavenirii’**
A cross between *D. cneorum* and *D. caucasica* that was raised in France in 1920. Has clusters of extremely fragrant, pale-pink flowers, darker in the centres, from late spring well into summer. A spreading shrub, it grows best on alkaline soil. 60cm. RHS H4, USDA 5a-8b.



***D. tangutica***
A small, rounded shrub with neat, leathery, evergreen leaves. Modest clusters of heavily fragrant, white-flushed, purple flowers open from purple buds in spring, and often again in late summer. Red fruits follow.
60cm. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.

## How to grow

- Daphnes can prove difficult to grow in some situations. Although hardy they dislike exposed sites and are happiest with shelter from cold, drying winds. They need enough direct light to flower well, but hate hot, sunny conditions.
- Most are happier on neutral to alkaline soils. Some experts recommend *Daphne bholua* for acid soils, however, in reality it seems to thrive on fertile soil over chalk. The ideal is a loam-rich soil with good drainage, but sufficient moisture.
- Most daphnes resent being grown in containers, this is also an issue for the nurseryman when attempting to produce plants for sale. If attempting to grow in a pot, choose a loam-based growing medium and a large container with good drainage. However, the open ground is always preferable.
- Daphnes resent being disturbed, so get the planting position right from the outset. Unlike other shrubs daphnes do not produce a dense, fibrous root system that holds together when they are lifted. Therefore, once out of the pot get them straight into the ground and then leave them alone.
- Pruning is only necessary to control shape and size, or to remove dead or damaged wood. Prune cautiously, immediately after flowering, but only if absolutely necessary. Hard pruning of some, notably *Daphne bholua*, can result in the production of suckers.
- Most daphnes are tricky to propagate, however, semi-hardwood cuttings taken in summer have a chance of success. Rather surprisingly *Daphne odora* is relatively easy to root from cuttings. It is advisable to root a few as replacement plants regularly.
- Daphnes are not long-lived shrubs and often decline in vigour after ten years or so in the garden. This is often because of a virus in the plant, which manifests itself by leaf loss and stunted growth. When this happens the infected plant should be taken out and replaced.

## Good companions

- The flowers and foliage of most daphnes may be attractive, but they are rarely outstanding; it’s the scent that is the quality to focus on. A daphne is not a shrub to feature as a focal point in a sunny border. It will not enjoy being baked and is unlikely to look its best. However, this is a shrub that comes into its own near a doorway, path or gate where its fragrance can delight all who pass.

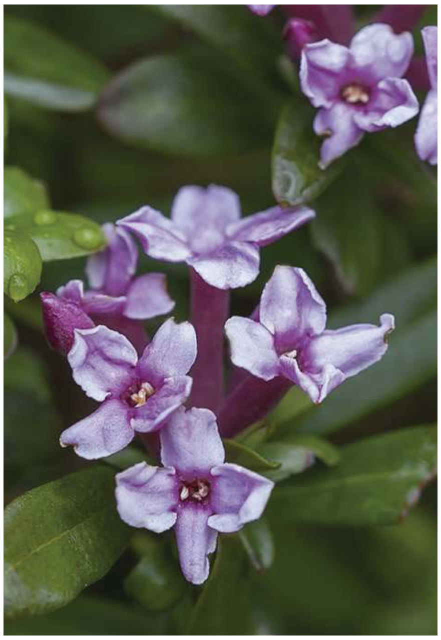
- Daphnes work well between deciduous shrubs that will provide shelter as well as shade to their roots in summer. Light, deciduous shrubs, such as *Cornus alba* 'Sibirica Variegata', are ideal. This adds foliage interest and colourful winter stems, so works with both winter- and summer-blooming daphnes.
- The low-growing and winter-flowering *D. odora* Rebecca has attractive variegated foliage, but its growth is open and can look sparse. However, if you underplant it with black *Ophiopogon planiscapus* 'Nigrescens' and sugar-pink *Cyclamen coum* these will enhance both the foliage and the mauve-pink blooms of the daphne.
- The low-growing *D.* x *transatlantica* is a good choice at the base of a wall or fence where the ground is partly shaded, and would work well at the base of a fragrant evergreen climber, such as *Trachelospermum jasminoides*. In midsummer the latter is smothered with jasmine-like, heavily scented flowers. Add a white variegated cultivar of *Euonymus fortunei* to complete the picture.

## Where to see

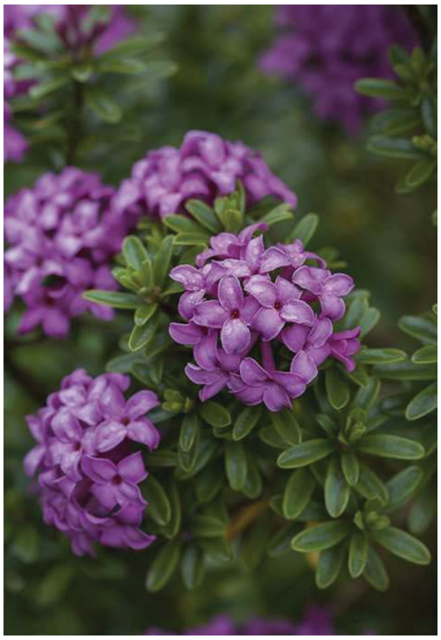
- **Brandy Mount House**
  Alresford, Hampshire SO24 9EG.
  Tel 01962 732189.
  Open by appointment. Home to National Collection of *Daphne*, held by Mr and Mrs Michael Baron.

## Where to buy

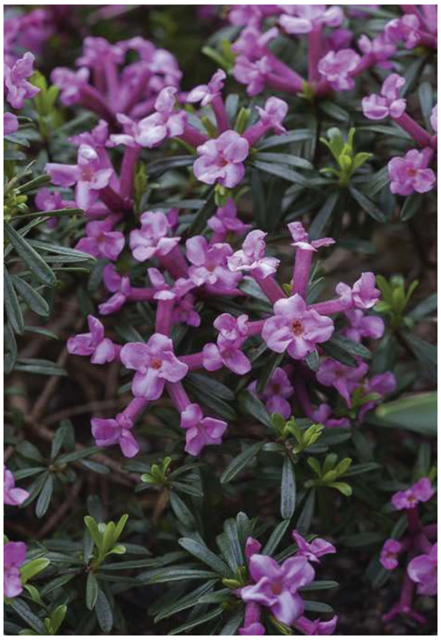
- **Junkers Nursery Ltd**
  Higher Cobhay, Milverton
  Somerset TA4 1NJ.
  Tel 01823 400075,
  junker.co.uk
- **Larch Cottage Nurseries**
  Melkinthorpe, Penrith,
  Cumbria CA10 2DR.
  Tel 01931 712404,
  larchcottage.co.uk
- **Pan-Global Plants**
  The Walled Garden, Frampton
  Court, Frampton-on-Severn,
  Gloucestershire GL2 7EX.
  Tel 01452 741641,
  panglobalplants.com



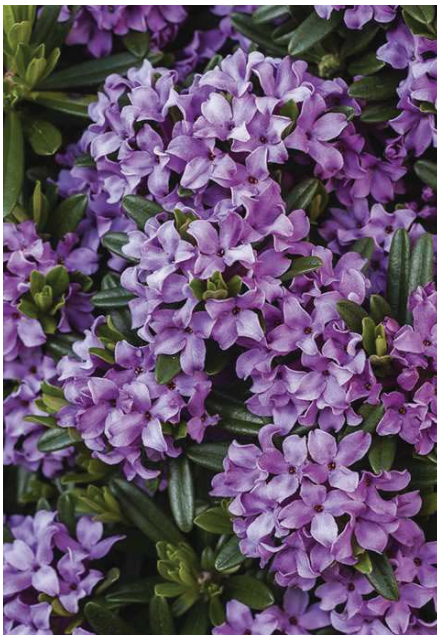
***Daphne* x *napolitana***
A compact, evergreen shrub with large terminal clusters of fragrant, purple-pink flowers; the colour fades as the flowers age. Needs neutral to acid soil in a sheltered situation and resents disturbance. 75cm. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.



***Daphne* x *rollsdorfii* 'Wilhelm Schacht'**
Bushy and upright in habit with glossy, evergreen leaves this small shrub has particularly showy clusters of highly fragrant, purple-pink flowers in mid-spring. Grows on alkaline or acid soil.
45cm. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

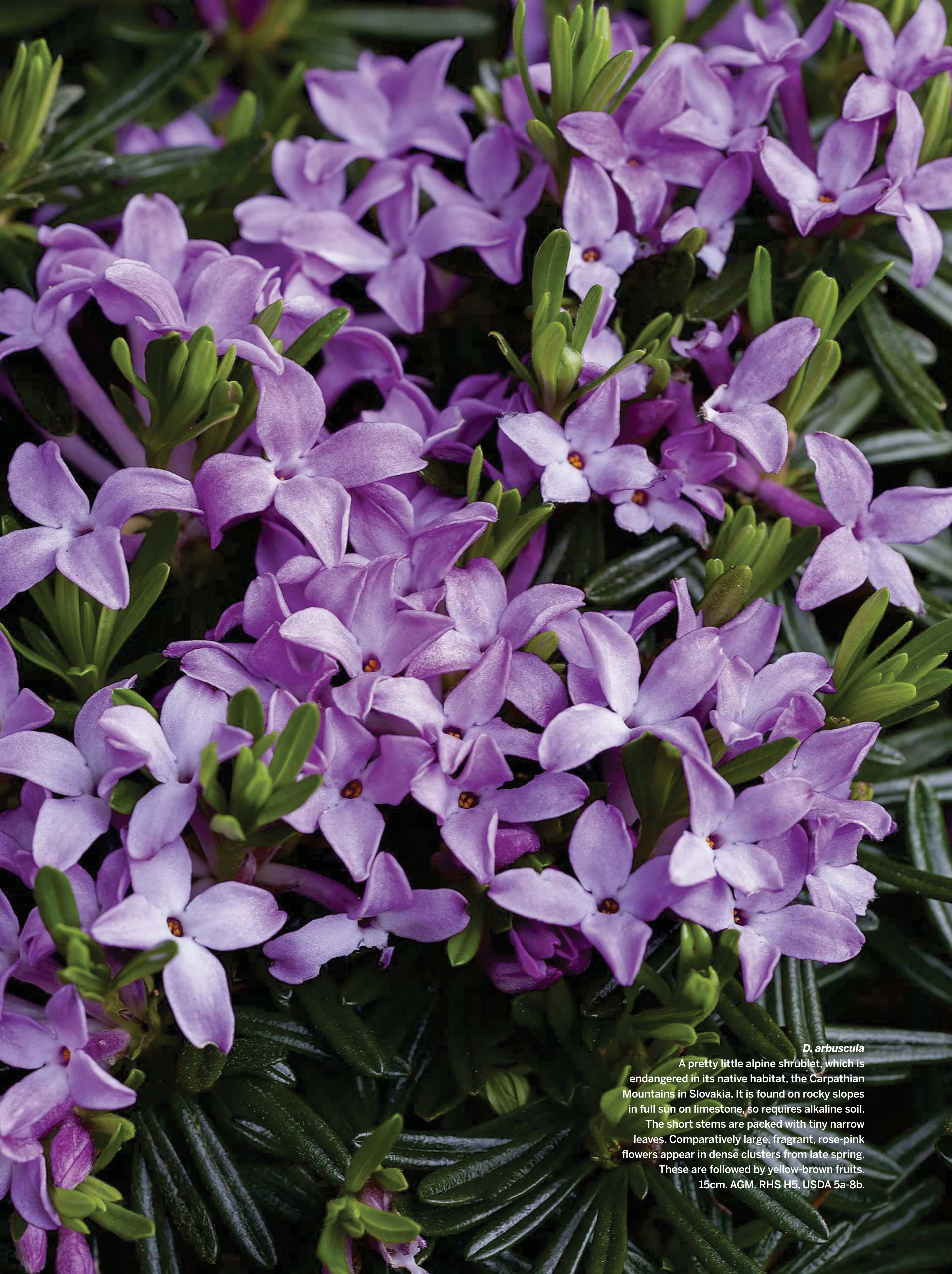


***Daphne* x *hendersonii***
A natural hybrid, discovered in Italy and introduced by Chris Brickell in 1981, this is a dwarf, evergreen shrub of prostrate habit. Fragrant, pink flowers open from mid spring to early summer, displayed against glossy green foliage. 30cm. RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.



***Daphne* x *susannae* 'Cheriton'**
A slow-growing evergreen shrub forming a low mound of shining green leaves, grey-green on the undersides. Clusters of fragrant, purple-pink flowers are produced in late spring and again in late summer.
45cm. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

MANY THANKS TO MR AND MRS BARON AT BRANDY MOUNT IN HAMPSHIRE WHERE THE MAJORITY OF THESE IMAGES WERE TAKEN.



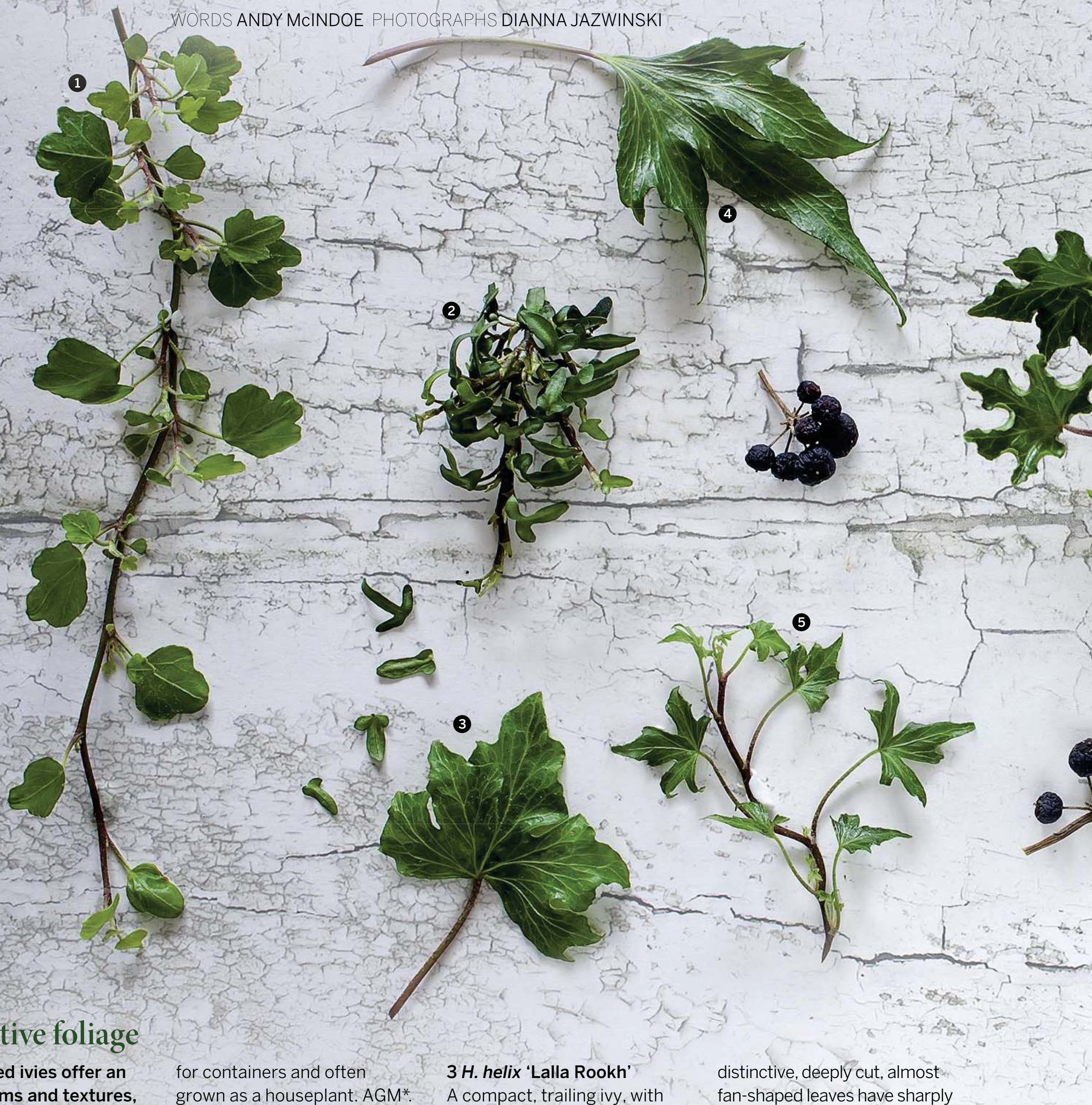
***D. arbuscula***

A pretty little alpine shrublet, which is endangered in its native habitat, the Carpathian Mountains in Slovakia. It is found on rocky slopes in full sun on limestone, so requires alkaline soil. The short stems are packed with tiny narrow leaves. Comparatively large, fragrant, rose-pink flowers appear in dense clusters from late spring. These are followed by yellow-brown fruits. 15cm. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.

# *HEDERA*

*Ivies are more than just climbers for shady walls. Many make excellent groundcover, and they are good in pots or window boxes. Others make brilliant houseplants and foliage for cutting. Compact forms can be also be used for topiary*

WORDS ANDY McINDOE PHOTOGRAPHS DIANNA JAZWINSKI



## Decorative foliage

**Green-leaved ivies offer an array of forms and textures, from the defined and bold, to the crimped and frilly.**

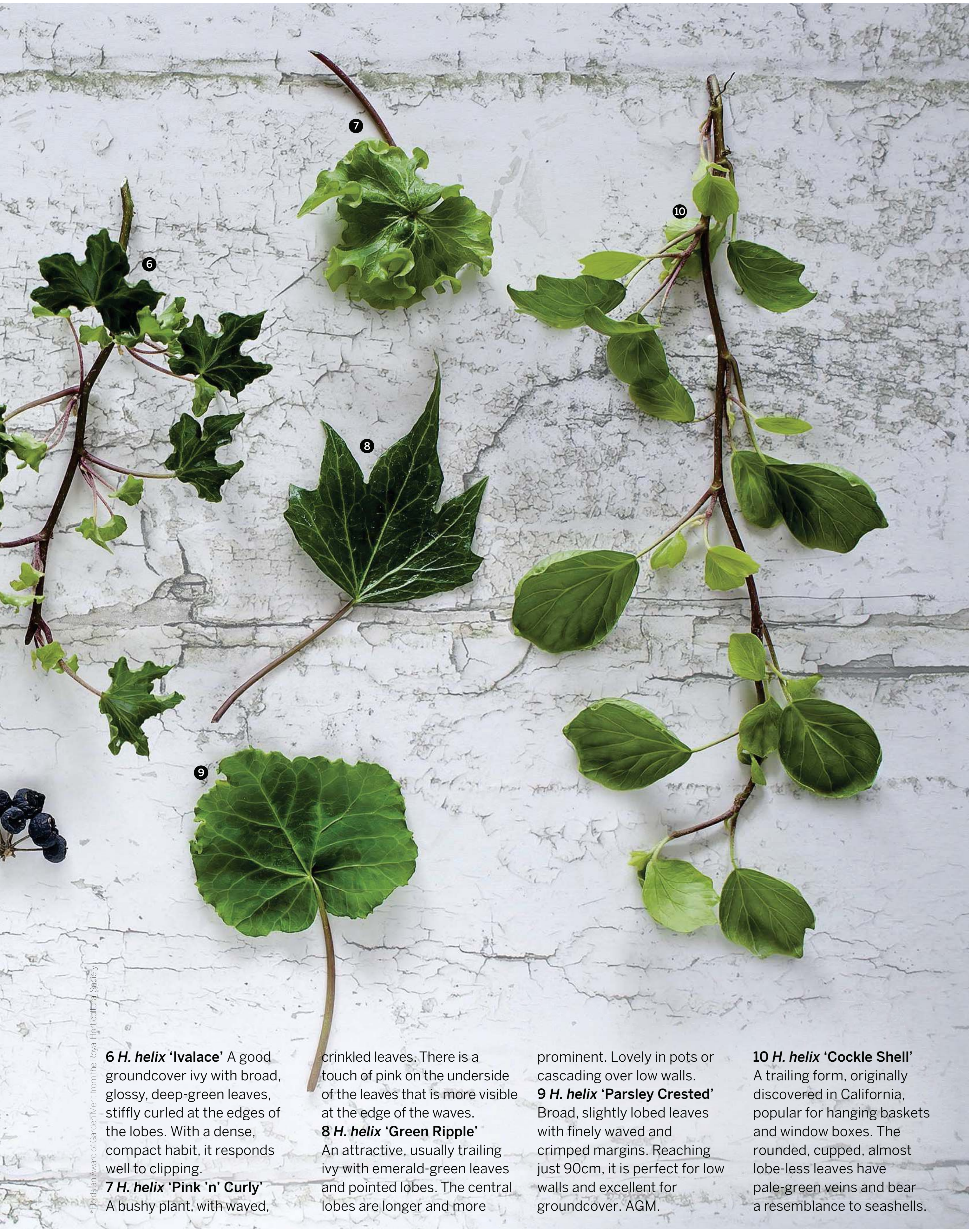
**1 *Hedera helix* 'Duckfoot'** Compact and trailing, with three-lobed, pale-green leaves that resemble webbed ducks' feet (hence the name). Good for containers and often grown as a houseplant. AGM*.

**2 *H. hibernica* 'Spetchley'** Small, dark-green, lobed leaves that turn bronze in winter. With compact, creeping, congested growth, it is perfect in containers or over rocks and low walls.

**3 *H. helix* 'Lalla Rookh'** A compact, trailing ivy, with broad, waved, emerald-green cut leaves with irregularly toothed lobes. Good as groundcover or in containers.

**4 *H. helix* 'Triton'** This bushy ivy is best grown as groundcover or in pots or containers. The distinctive, deeply cut, almost fan-shaped leaves have sharply pointed lobes.

**5 *H. helix* 'Anita'** A pretty, compact ivy with delicate arrow-head leaves resembling fleur-de-lys. Its trailing habit makes it ideal for pots or for training over topiary frames.



**6 *H. helix* 'Ivalace'** A good groundcover ivy with broad, glossy, deep-green leaves, stiffly curled at the edges of the lobes. With a dense, compact habit, it responds well to clipping.

**7 *H. helix* 'Pink 'n' Curly'** A bushy plant, with waved, crinkled leaves. There is a touch of pink on the underside of the leaves that is more visible at the edge of the waves.

**8 *H. helix* 'Green Ripple'** An attractive, usually trailing ivy with emerald-green leaves and pointed lobes. The central lobes are longer and more prominent. Lovely in pots or cascading over low walls.

**9 *H. helix* 'Parsley Crested'** Broad, slightly lobed leaves with finely waved and crimped margins. Reaching just 90cm, it is perfect for low walls and excellent for groundcover. AGM.

**10 *H. helix* 'Cockle Shell'** A trailing form, originally discovered in California, popular for hanging baskets and window boxes. The rounded, cupped, almost lobe-less leaves have pale-green veins and bear a resemblance to seashells.

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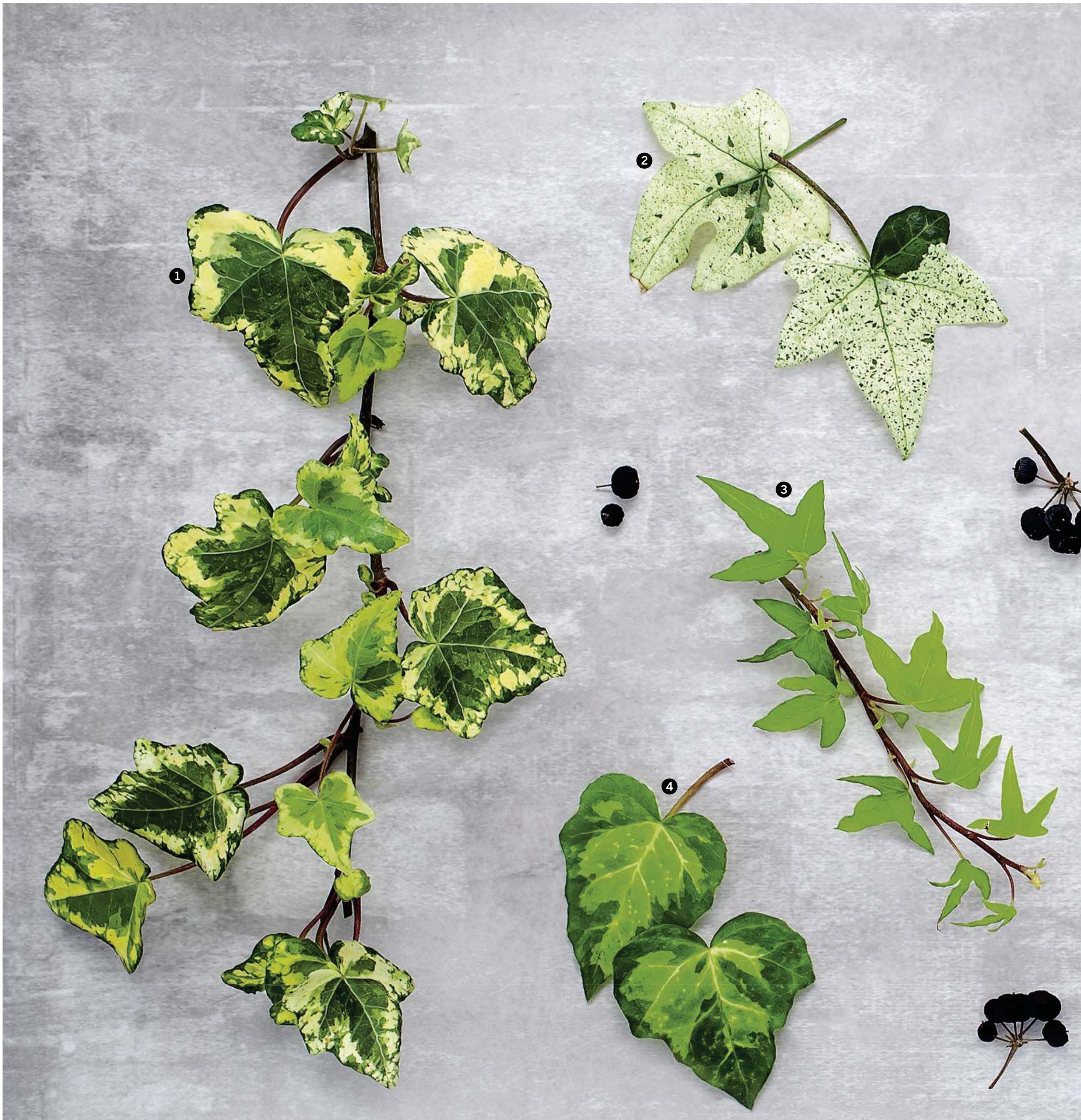
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.



## Variegations: cream and yellow

**Cream and yellow-flushed and variegated ivies light up shady walls and fences and contrast with dark, evergreen shrubs in pots.**

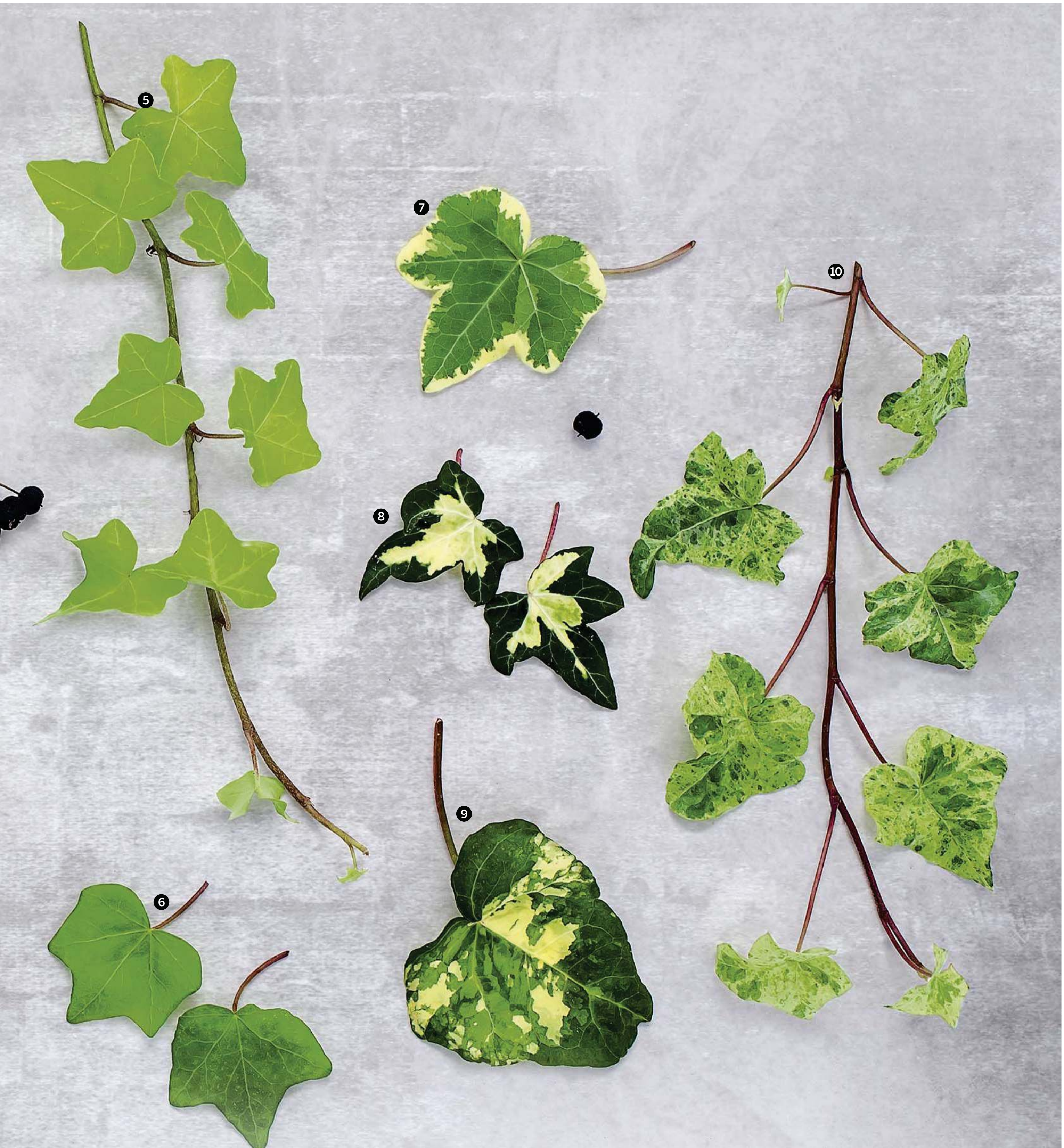
**1 *H. helix* 'Golden Ingot'**
A slow-growing climber reaching up to 90cm. Soft, golden-yellow leaves, splashed, edged and blotched with lime, grey-green and emerald. AGM.

**2 *H. helix* 'Jersey Doris'**
A very slow-growing climbing ivy with five-lobed leaves that are mostly light cream, finely speckled and occasionally blotched with green. Good on a dark fence or wall.

**3 *H. helix* 'Goldfinch'** A tiny ivy with delicate, pointed, three- or five-lobed leaves of golden-green. Perfect for pots, over rocks or as groundcover.

**4 *H. colchica* 'Sulphur Heart'**
A vigorous climber reaching up to 8m. The large, deep-green leaves are boldly splashed with gold fading to lime. Also good as groundcover. AGM.

**5 *H. helix* 'Buttercup'**
A slow-growing climber up to 2.5m, and one of the best for colour. The young, rich-yellow leaves turn lime green with age. The colour is stronger in full sun. AGM.



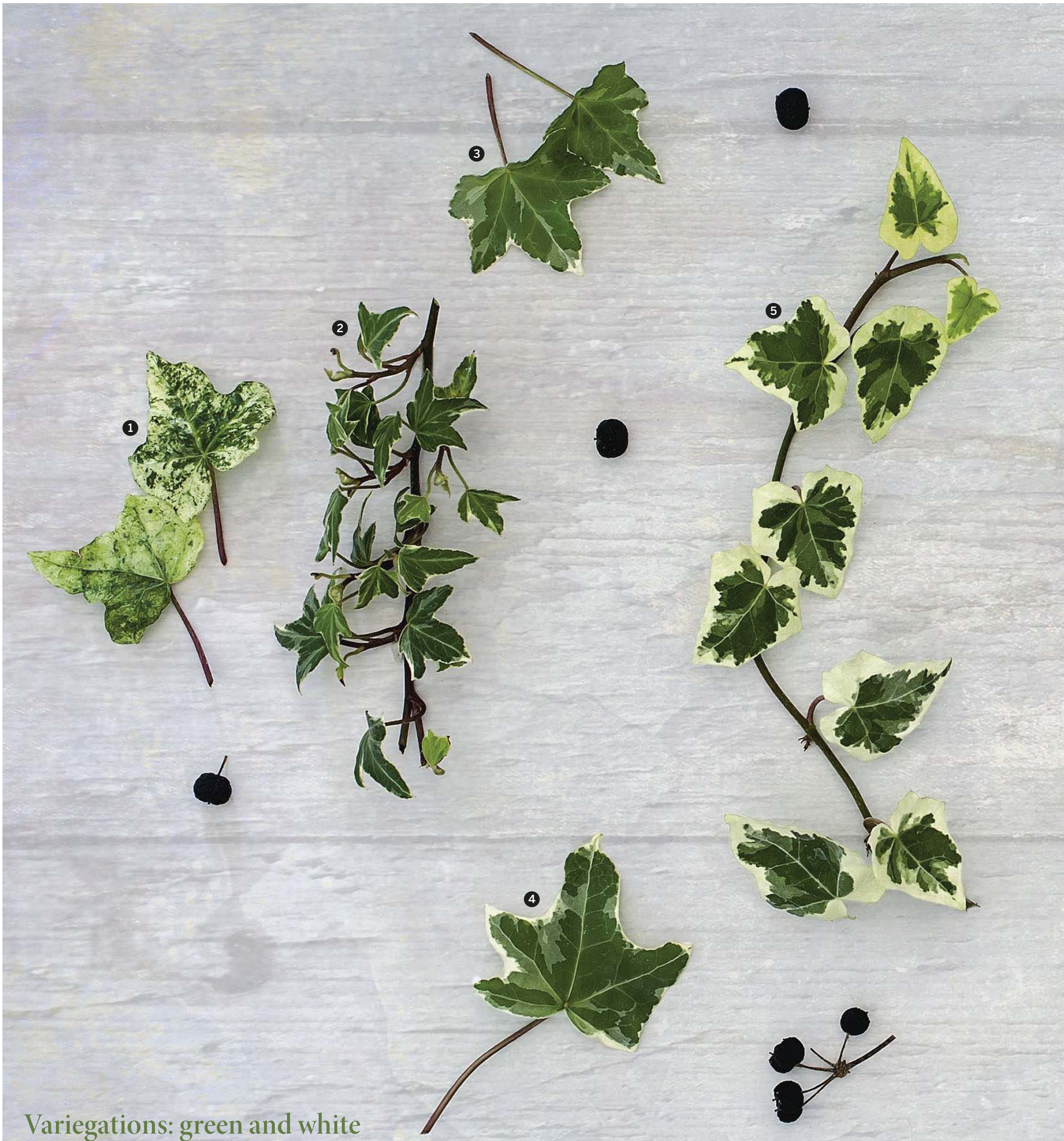
**6 *H. helix* 'Amber Waves'** A compact climber or trailer growing to 90cm. The broad, almost square leaves are yellow-green and overlap one another. Good for containers and baskets.

**7 *H. helix* 'Golden Girl'** A versatile ivy that grows fast for a variegated form. The broad, lobed leaves are bright golden-yellow on the crimped and waved margins. Raised at ivy experts Fibrex Nurseries.

**8 *H. helix* 'Oro di Bogliasco'** A vigorous climber, reaching 8m. Its neat, dark-green leaves are blotched at the centre with bright gold, and are carried on reddish stems. Cut out any reverted plain-green growth.

**9 *H. helix* 'Midas Touch'** A creeping ivy that rarely climbs, perfect for pots and containers, indoors or out. The triangular, dark-green leaves are conspicuously mottled with gold and lime-green. AGM.

**10 *H. helix* 'Luzii'** This fast-growing, medium-sized climber is popular as a houseplant. The pale-green leaves are mottled with dark green and sage tones. Cut out any reverted shoots.



## Variegations: green and white

**Green and white or cream variegations make uplifting backdrops as climbers, and enliven shady borders.**

**1 *H. helix* 'Sally'** Ideal for lighting up a shady wall, this slow-growing climber (to 3m) has cream to pale-yellow leaves spotted with green.

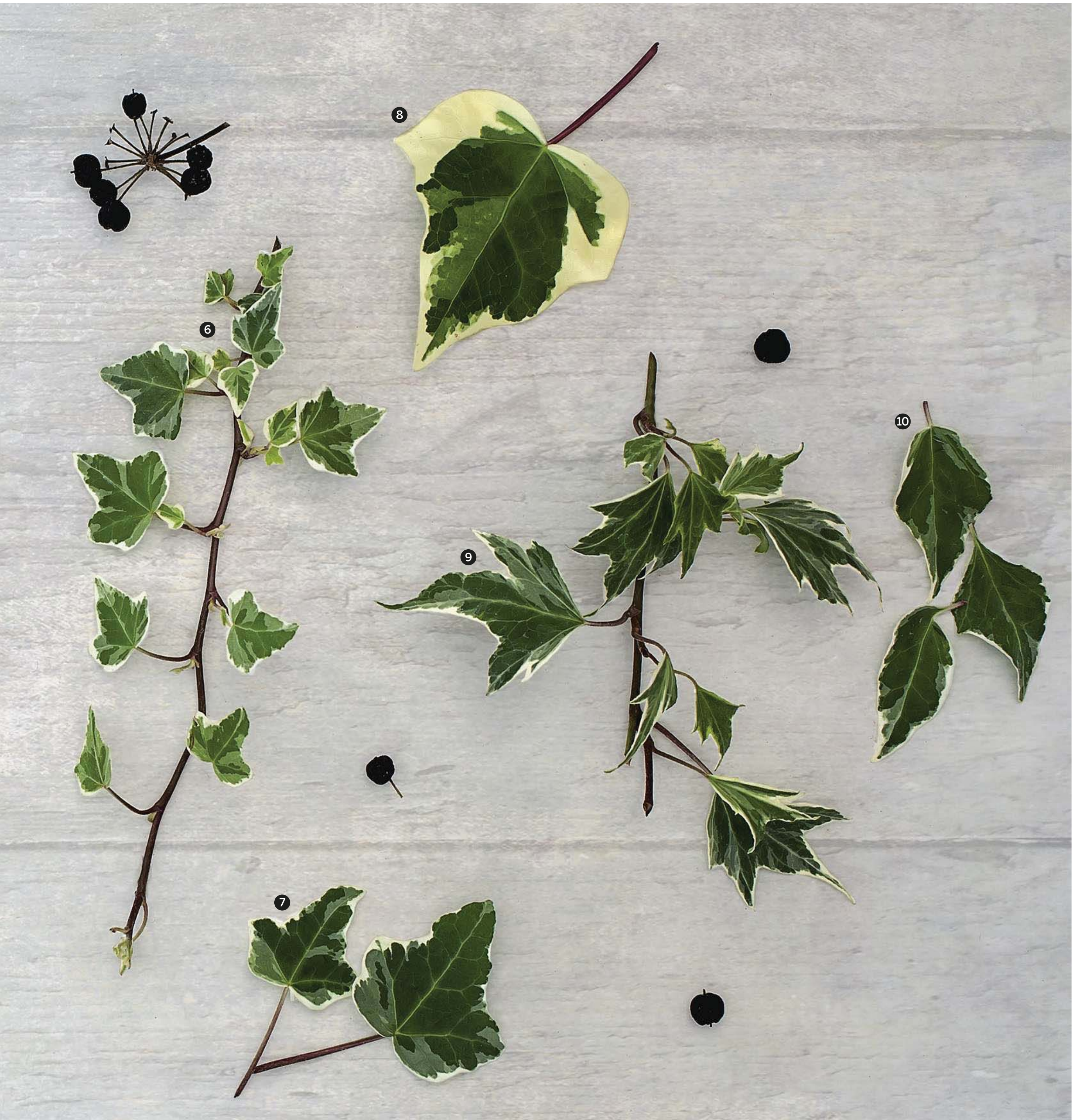
**2 *H. helix* 'Misty'** This compact ivy has small leaves with pointed, grey-green lobes, finely edged with cream. Ideal for pots and as a houseplant.

**3 *H. helix* 'Heise'** A medium-sized climber. The pale- and dark-green, three-lobed leaves are edged with cream.

**4 *H. helix* 'Silver King'** A good climbing and trailing ivy with five-lobed leaves, the central lobe longer than the rest. The dark leaves are grey-green in the centre and edged with creamy white.

**5 *H. helix* 'Chester'** An attractive climber, not too dense. The broad, triangular and dark-green, marbled leaves have grey-green centres and bright-cream margins.

**6 *H. helix* 'Ardingly'** A neat, trailing ivy with dark stems and three-lobed, grey-green leaves edged with cream. Attractive in pots and as floral decoration.



**7 *H. helix* 'Glacier'** A fast-growing climber, with grey-green leaves edged with cream. Good as groundcover on dry, shady slopes. AGM.
**8 *H. algeriensis* 'Gloire de Marengo'** A vigorous climber, growing up to 4m. The bold, triangular, grey-green leaves are edged with cream. Great on a shady wall. AGM.
**9 *H. helix* 'White Ripple'** An attractive climbing or trailing ivy. Its sharply lobed leaves, edged with cream, create a feathery effect. Grows to 3m.
**10 *H. helix* 'Little Diamond'** A dwarf, bushy ivy with small, diamond-shaped, grey-green leaves edged with cream. Good in pots and indoors.

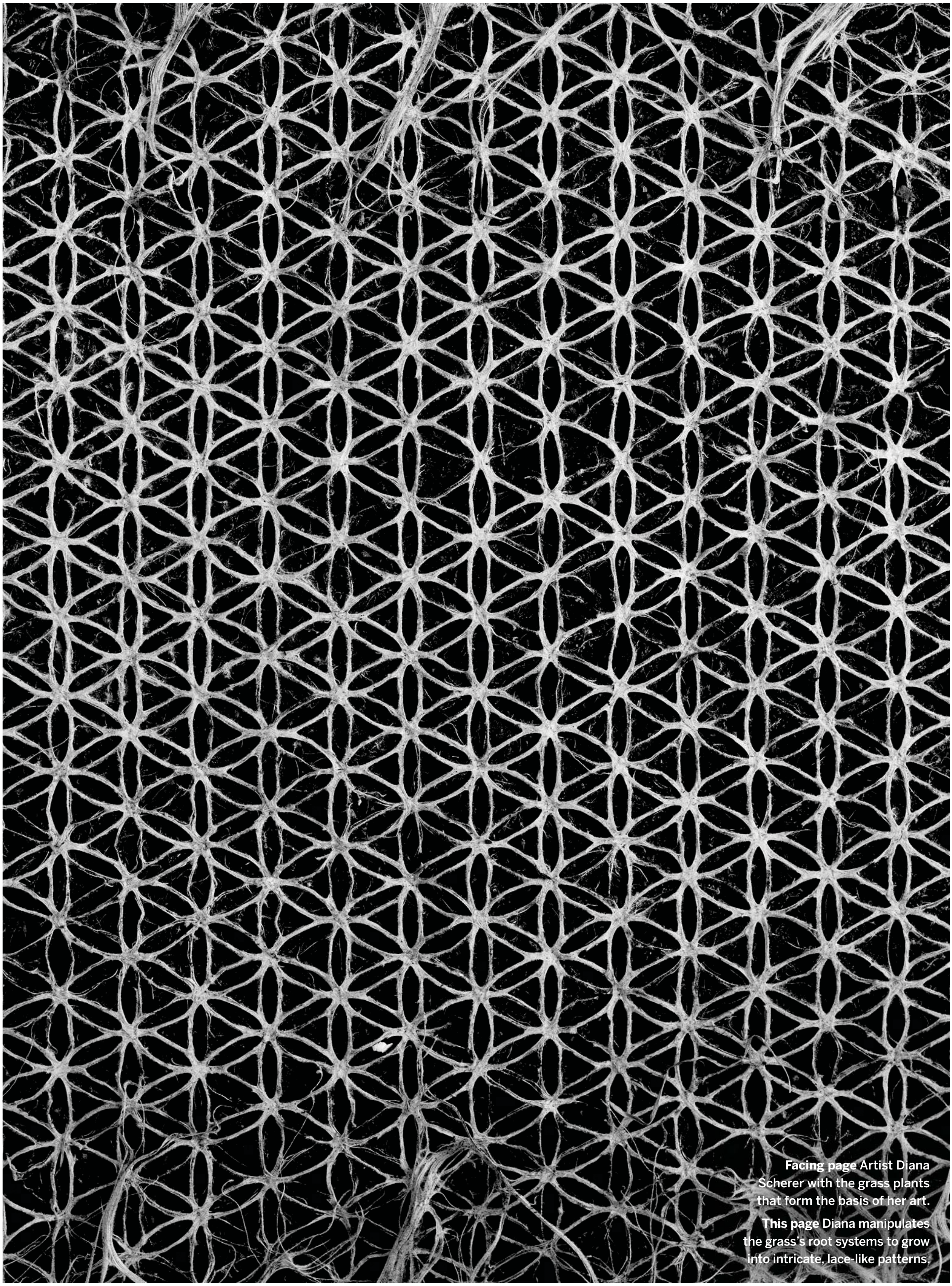
**USEFUL INFORMATION**
Most ivies are classified as RHS H5, USDA 6a-11, although sheltered situations have a great influence, and plants grown in pots in colder regions may need winter protection.

Ivies grown and supplied by Fibrex Nurseries, Honeybourne Road, Pebworth, Warwickshire CV37 8XP. Tel 01789 720788, fibrex.co.uk

# GOING BACK TO HER ROOTS

Inspired by Darwin's theory on plant intelligence, German artist Diana Scherer manipulates the root systems of grass to weave patterns of magical beauty

WORDS ALYS HURN PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREW MONTGOMERY



**Facing page** Artist Diana Scherer with the grass plants that form the basis of her art.

**This page** Diana manipulates the grass's root systems to grow into intricate, lace-like patterns.

In an introductory paragraph on the homepage of her website, German artist Diana Scherer references *The Power of Movement of Plants*, a study by Charles and Francis Darwin into the movement of plant roots. She highlights their discovery that plants do not passively grow down but move and observe, demonstrating an intelligence that is often overlooked, but it is this intelligence that has enabled Diana to create stunning pieces of art made entirely from the roots of plants.

Her fascination with plant roots began while studying fine art and photography at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam. Diana developed a series of portraits called *Nurture Studies*, revealing the complex structure of roots in vases by photographing each plant with the vessel they had grown into, removed. She experimented with more than 100 different plants, from poppies and dandelions, to grasses and nettles but it was during this study that she began to connect different plant roots to different materials; the grass roots looked like silk, verbena roots like linen and daisy roots like wool. Diana became taken with the idea that she could create her own patterns using the root system and decided to take her study further.

With the help of plant biologists at Radboud University in Nijmegen, the Netherlands, Diana discovered that by using reusable subterranean plastic templates and the natural energy of the plants, she could mould the growing roots. However, exactly how she does this is a well-kept secret. “It’s difficult for me not to tell,” she says. “But my colleagues don’t tell their secrets either. I’m an artist and if I tell you everything the mystery will be gone.” Although she likes to maintain the mystery, she will reveal that each template is a different pattern, based on basic geometric patterns in nature, such as the hexagon of a honeycomb, a favourite of Diana’s because of its simplicity.

Over time, Diana has developed two techniques. The first is her thick, rug-like pieces, where the soil is very much a part of the live design and the second, is the dried, textile-like material, which is considerably thinner. This technique requires a little maintenance once the pieces have finished growing to remove the soil and prevent the roots from rotting but Diana is happy to leave a little soil on the work to maintain a connection to the growing process. “I think the soil gives a special layer to the work,” she says. “There is always soil at the back of the pieces but I think it makes it more honest. Soil is quite an important medium to me because it is so much a part of the process.” Diana uses grass seed because of its strength and its ability to densely fill her templates, and chose a mix of compost and cocoa peat or coir as her winning soil combination because she liked the yellow-tinge the peat gives to the roots.

> IT MAY SOUND CLICHÉD TO MAKE A DRESS BUT I THINK IT IS ALSO VERY ORGANIC TO FOLLOW A BODY WITH THE GROWING ROOTS

The textile pieces she developed tempted Diana down the path of sustainability and the potential of plants as an alternative material. Diana has always had a keen interest in textile and fashion design. Before studying in Amsterdam, she applied to study fashion at Central Saint Martins in London but failed to win a place on the coveted course. Years later, she has come full circle and her work in *Root System Domestication* has led her to design a dress. “It was very natural,” she says. “It may sound clichéd to make a dress but I think it is also very organic to follow a body with the growing roots.”

Although the dress is a piece of art, for Diana it is the first step towards creating a material or fabric that could be applied in the future, an area of design she is serious about exploring. “I’d like to think it could be something someone could wear but I need a few more years. I’m not in a rush because I enjoy the work so much, it’s such a beautiful way to work.”

Diana still works closely with Radboud University and in a few weeks, will move from her studio to its warm greenhouse where she can grow up to 20 designs at once, and is looking forward to experimenting with different plants. “Study, research, doing and producing,” she says. “It’s important.” □

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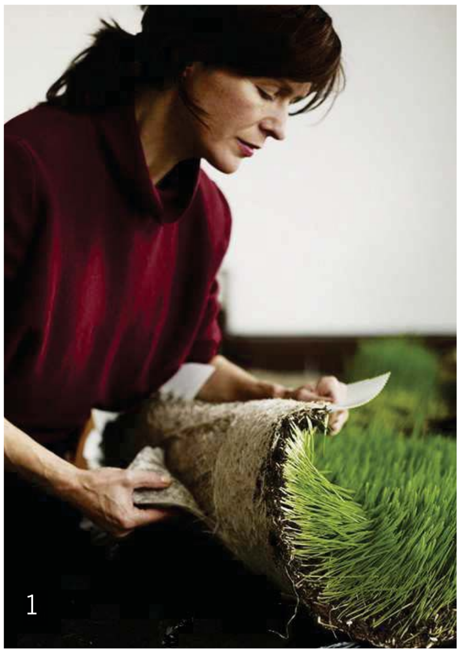
**USEFUL INFORMATION**

Look out for Diana’s work at the *Fashioned from Nature* exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, which runs from 21 April. Find out more about Diana’s work at **dianascherer.nl**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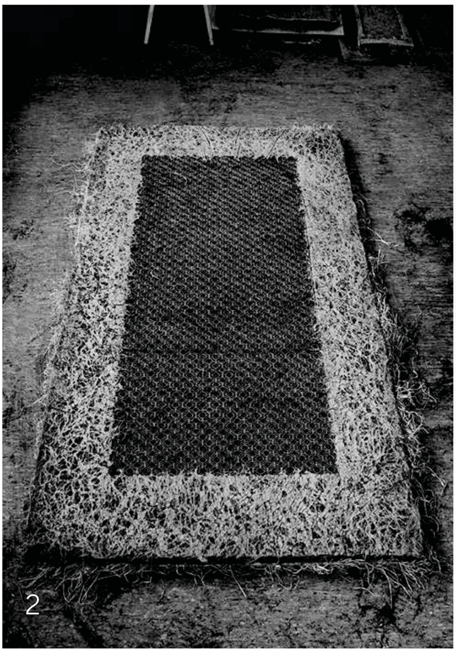
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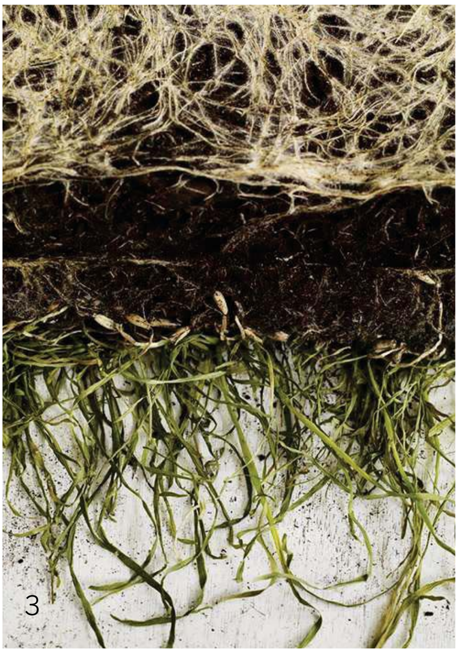
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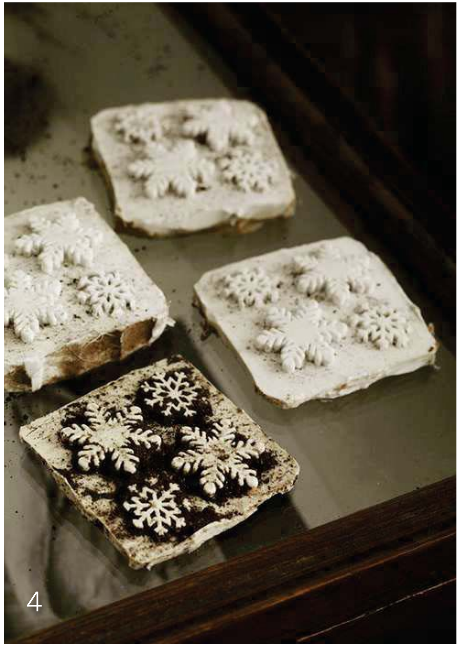
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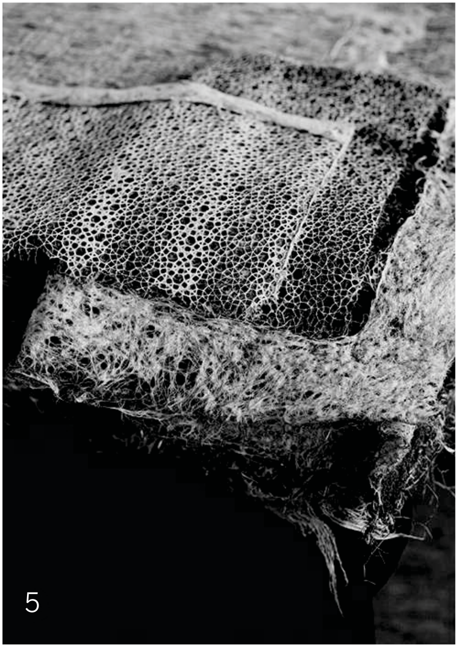
**1** Diana inserts two layers of plastic in the soil when the seed is sown so when she harvests her work, she can cut between the sheets to remove the roots.
**2** When Diana exhibits her thick, rug-like pieces, they remain fresh for a week before starting to dry out.
**3** The soil is an important part of the work and keeps the connection to the growing process.
**4** Inspired by nature, Diana designs her template patterns herself. These are some experiments for her pattern design.
**5** The textile-like pieces are cut away very carefully from the overturned pieces.
**6** Diana has six or seven templates growing at any one time in her studio.
**7** The stunning root-bound dress is a first for Diana but she has plans to investigate sustainable fashion further.
**8** After experimenting with many different types of seed, Diana chose grass because of its density and strength.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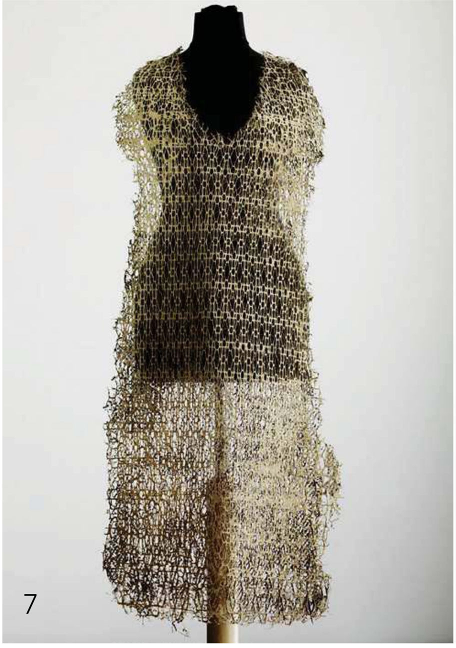
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HORTICULTURAL WHO’S WHO

# *PAUL BARNEY*

The owner of the deliciously surprising Edulis Nursery on his bohemian childhood, following in Gerald Durrell’s footsteps and the ferry journey that changed his life

WORDS JODIE JONES PORTRAIT CHARLIE HOPKINSON

When Paul Barney’s ship sank he was furious. “I felt such rage that my life was about to end when I had only just got started.” He was travelling home from an Estonian willow conference on that night in 1994 when disaster struck. The incident killed 852 people, and Paul was moments from death himself when he was finally winched to safety from an upturned life raft six traumatic hours later.

The path that brought him to that fateful point was by no means straightforward. He had a bohemian upbringing in rural Berkshire, surrounded by cats, dogs, chickens and guinea pigs. “There was home brew in the bath and a complete disregard for the normal rules of family life. We children had a brilliant time.”

He grew prize-winning vegetables, raced a motorbike around the country lanes and, when his father died unexpectedly, dropped out of school early. He took a job as a slumpy (the excellent name for a concrete technician) for the cash and the company car but found it “stultifyingly boring” so jacked it in and, at the age of 19, drove coast to coast across northern America. This epic road trip through extraordinary scenery ignited a fascination with geology and began his lifelong love of travel. “It’s the best way I know to get the headspace to clear your vision.”

> I LOVE THE CAMARADERIE AT SHOWS, BUT I REALLY MISS ENJOYING SPRING. FOR A NURSERYMAN IT IS THE MOST STRESSFUL TIME OF YEAR

Back in England, he got a place to read Biology and Geology at Oxford Polytechnic. “Once I’d made my mind up I was determined. I might have looked like I partied all the time, but I knew how to focus on my studies when I needed to.” He completed the degree with flying colours then started but chose not to complete further degrees in soil science and environmental biology, each time disillusioned by academic supervisors who did not share his ecological principles.

Permaculture pioneer Bill Mollison, and Lawrence Hills, who championed organic growing, were his heroes. He became a trustee of the Soil Association, and by the early 1980s was volunteering at the Centre for Alternative Technology in Wales. “At that time CAT was a melting pot of amazing characters with all sorts of artisan skills who helped me develop artistically.” Inspired to put his ideas about sustainable horticulture into practice and create local employment, he secured a government grant to set up a landscaping firm, with commissions including a forest garden for the general director of the Glyndebourne opera.

Through these years of self-discovery, he returned intermittently to garden at his family home in Berkshire, did a lot of yoga and volunteered for CND. He also travelled extensively, from olive picking in the Northern Peloponnese to an epic adventure around India and seven consecutive trips to Corfu, which he first discovered through the books of Gerald Durrell. Wherever he travelled, he was as fascinated by the people as the plants. “I always love to visit the markets and see what people are selling to eat. Looking back, I was putting a set of strings on my bow.”

These came together in 1990 when he enrolled on the Masters course in Landscape Architecture at Sheffield University. “Today Sheffield is a very forward-thinking department, but back then it was quite different. Our year was a great group, socially and academically, and we shook that place to pieces. We were driven by the idea of sustainability and helped set the department in a direction that has led to where it is today.”

He completed his Masters in 1992 and returned to the family garden in Berkshire once more. “I set up Paul Barney Landscapes, to earn cash laying patios and stuff. But I also set up Edulis Nursery, to provide plants for permaculture. The problem was that no one into permaculture ever bought plants – they just traded between themselves.” It took almost 15 years for the nursery to become financially viable, but Paul never contemplated selling mainstream ornamentals. “I want to grow what I want to grow, even if it doesn’t sell.”

Gradually the world caught up with him, and Edulis now has an unrivalled reputation for its portfolio of rare plants and esoteric edibles, many collected by Paul on his travels. He famously sold Mark Diacono some of his first Szechuan peppers, caused a stir at Chelsea in 2012 with his stunning display in the Great Pavilion, and is a regular on the rare-plant fair circuit. “I don’t know how much longer I will carry on though,” says Paul. “I love the camaraderie at the shows, but I feel uneasy trailing the motorways burning diesel and I really miss enjoying spring. For a nurseryman it is the most stressful time of year. I’d love to spend those months travelling slowly from southern Europe up to Scandinavia. And I have the urge finally to create a great garden of my own.” After the shipwreck, Paul was determined that it wouldn’t be the defining experience of his life. “But it made me realise the importance of living your dreams. The idea of a garden is there in my mind so, although it may mean leaving Berkshire and the nursery, one day it will have to be done.” □

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**USEFUL INFORMATION**
Edulis Nursery, The Walled Garden, Tidmarsh Lane, Pangbourne, Berkshire RG8 8HT. Tel 01635 578113, **edulis.co.uk**

**NEXT MONTH** Garden designer and TV presenter Nick Bailey.

UNHCR

# GARDENS OF HOPE

*Far from being temporary, refugee camps can provide accommodation for displaced people for many years. Gardens bring stability, beauty and dignity*

WORDS CAROLINE BECK

If proof were needed that gardening is much more than just labour, then the stories emerging from a remote area of northern Iraq make a powerful case. Domiz is a windswept refugee camp in the plains of Kurdistan. Intermittent water and electricity supplies to more than 5,000 shelters provide a home, of sorts, to around 26,000 refugees many of them women and children, most forced out of neighbouring Syria by the brutal seven-year civil war. But for the past two years Domiz has been the seedbed of a small but important project to create gardens among the makeshift houses, tended by people who have lost almost everything. It's co-ordinated and developed by the Lemon Tree Trust, a UK-based Community Interest Company (CIC) that began working in the camp in 2015 after seeing people creating their own patches of garden among the ugly sprawl of concrete, steel and flapping tarpaulins. It began in the simplest way possible, a modest competition to celebrate Domiz's best garden, and has developed into a lifeline providing food, work and hope for hundreds of migrant families.

One of the people behind the Trust is Dr Mikey Tomkins, an artist and urban food specialist, whose 2014 PhD in urban agriculture entitled 'Making Space for Food' led him to map empty spaces in cities including London and Newcastle that could be used for growing food. "Growing nutritious crops requires little investment and can be done on even the smallest plots of land with even limited growing periods. It also can draw from traditional knowledge, skills, local resources and seeds and provides an opportunity to recover and reuse organic solid waste and waste water," he explains. His research in the UK lead him to a collaborative project with the Hunt Institute for Engineering & Humanity, a humanitarian group based in Dallas, establishing community gardens in disadvantaged areas helping refugees to grow their own food. He saw first-hand how urban agriculture gave people with almost nothing an investment in their future. Meanwhile at Coventry University, another academic, Dr Andrew Adam-Bradford, was also exploring how urban agriculture could help support forced migrants. "He had extensive experience in refugee camps," says Dr Tomkins. "And knew that the Kurdish government were open to discussions so he suggested to me that we should visit Domiz Refugee Camp."

The camp was established in 2012 in the wake of the vast humanitarian refugee crisis in Syria. By 2015 small gardens had sprung up around many shelters growing flowers, fruit, vegetables and herbs, often the only link people had with their homeland. Many come from a farming background, and because fresh food in the camp is very expensive, some began to establish small growing areas to become self-sufficient. "Refugees are only allowed to earn $20 a day in cash-for-work aid programmes so the economy of the camp isn't skewed, but this often leads to systematic poverty," says Dr Tomkins, who recognised a practical and emotional need for gardens. In 2015, the Trust distributed 500 lemon trees to migrants, followed the next year by a garden competition in the camp, which has become an annual event attracting hundreds of entries. In 2017 work began on the Azadi (or Liberation) Garden in a unused area of the camp, a place that now resembles a community allotment ▷

**Left** At the centre of the camp is a fenced-off communal area that the refugees have named the Azadi (Liberation) Garden. The whole community came together in 2017 to build raised beds for the area, with each family allocated a bed for their own use. Many have also created gardens of their own, growing everything from fragrant roses to onions and fresh herbs, or one of the 500 lemon trees distributed in 2015.

YOU TRY TO REMEMBER SOMETHING FROM YOUR LIFE IN SYRIA… THE SAME PLANTS AND FLOWERS… SO YOU FEEL AT HOME AND COMFORTABLE

▷ with raised beds, polytunnels, a small nursery and a borehole for water. With so much unemployment and so many skills the work was all able to be carried out by the refugees. One worker, a woman called Aveen, speaks of the number of very traumatised women and children who live in the camp who need help and support. “In the garden we’ve built a special section for them so they can benefit from plants, vegetables and flowers and either sell the surplus or share them with neighbours. It helps strengthen community ties.”

Their experiences are both hauntingly personal and recognisably universal. Khaled, aged 44, recalls arriving in Domiz. “We were hugely surprised when we arrived in the camp. It was like being given an electric shock. There was no tent for us. Some days all we had to eat were crackers and biscuits. Then I decided I’m going to create something beautiful here.” In his small, breeze-block compound he planted scented pelargoniums, lemon verbena, roses and herbs in anything he could use as a container. “The camp is closed like a shell, but in my garden I feel like I’m in my kingdom. And when I’ve finished gardening I feel like I have the world in my hand.”

Others say the gardens clean the air (important when the sewers are often open and the rubbish collections intermittent) and the sight of fresh, green growth in the barren camp gives people hope. One woman, who lost her husband during the civil war, created her flower-filled garden with her 11-year-old daughter. The honeysuckle around her door perfumes the air for her neighbours in the evening, and she shares the mint and lettuce she grows there, as well as opening up the compound gate so others can see its beauty. “It’s my life,” she says simply.

In 2011 Avine Ismail was living with her husband and three young children in Damascus, a neighbourhood abundant with fruit, vegetables and flowers. Following the demonstrations for freedom, the Syrian army began attacking civilians, so Avine and her family fled for their lives to Iraq, eventually ending up in Domiz. With her husband away fighting in the Kurdish military forces, and her youngest daughter suffering from a severe heart complaint, growing flowers and food has helped her cope by giving her a positive memory of city to which she can never return. “In this camp, being so far away, you try to remember something from your life in Syria. You try to find the same seeds of plants and flowers… so you feel at home and comfortable for a while.” The words ‘hope’ and ‘beauty’ come up so often, it’s evident that these modest gardens provide a sanctuary unavailable anywhere else in their lives.

The Lemon Tree Trust is now extending its work to providing Crisis Response Garden Kits, ranging in size from a family garden to a large community project, providing seeds and tools so that newly arrived refugees can start growing food immediately. To date 1,200 kits have been designed and assembled in Domiz by a workers’ co-operative made up of refugees, with funding from cosmetics company LUSH and distributed by an Iraqi NGO, Mercy Hands.

The last word goes to Nohad Kalash, aged 36, who with his wife and five young children has created a garden of touching beauty. “When we arrived in the camp it was cold and snowing. The children were crying from the cold. We had nothing. I grew up surrounded by green. Without green the world is meaningless. Where there’s green, there’s happiness.” □

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**USEFUL INFORMATION**

The Lemon Tree Trust is sponsoring a garden at this year’s RHS Chelsea Flower Show designed by Tom Massey. For details on the Trust and its partner organisations visit **lemontreetrust.org**

**Right** Throughout the camp residents have created individual gardens using any spare land or containers they can lay their hands on. The Trust is also now employing a workers’ co-operative (second from bottom right) based in the camp to design and assemble Crisis Response Garden Kits containing tools and seeds to help newly arrived refugee families. For Khaled (bottom right), spending time in his garden lets him feel “like I’m in my kingdom”.

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LEMON
LEMON TREE TRUST
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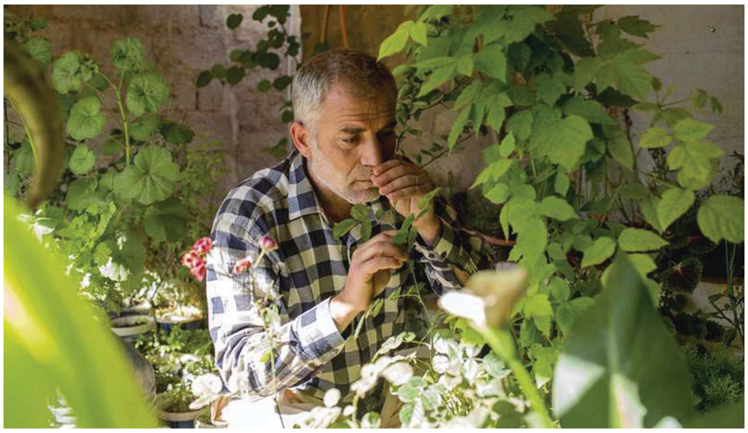
CRISIS RESPONSE GARDEN



ALL IMAGES © THE LEMON TREE TRUST

# KNOW YOUR TREES

## Part 4 Parks and grand gardens

Lia Leendertz concludes our four-part series with a look at some of the largest and most stately trees to grace our parks and country estates

WORDS **LIA LEENDERTZ** PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**

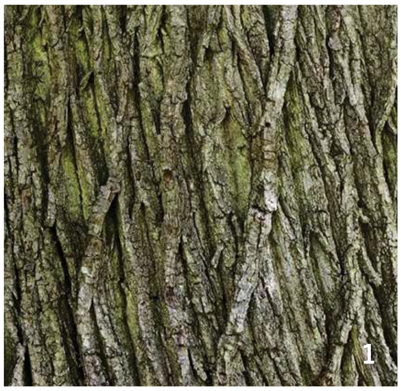
**Big trees, such as this *Acer pseudoplatanus*, dominate much of the British countryside in parks and country estates.**

BLICKWINKEL / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

A broad and handsome tree, the majestic sweet chestnut has long, elegant leaves.

## *Castanea sativa* sweet chestnut

Sweet chestnuts feel like native trees, but this is perhaps because they have been in the UK for so long. In fact they are native to southern Europe and Asia Minor, but were brought here by the Romans, who planted them across the empire. Sweet chestnut is loved for its edible nuts, collected as they fall in autumn and delicious roasted. In parts of the Mediterranean such as Corsica where it is mountainous and impossible to grow wheat, sweet chestnuts are grown in vast numbers and the nuts ground down to make flour, which has become a staple in the local diet. In the UK the tree is found in woodlands and parkland, and is particularly common in the southeast of England, where it was once grown in large numbers and coppiced for poles and for charcoal production. Sweet chestnuts can live for up to 700 years.



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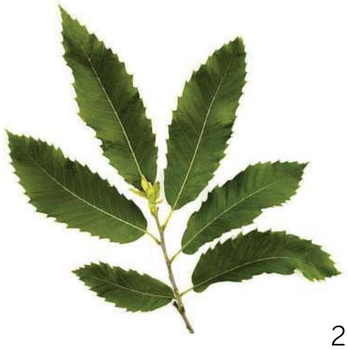

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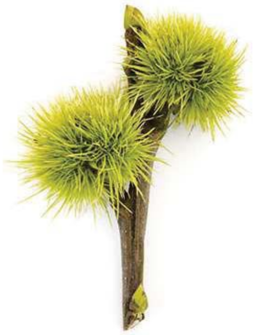

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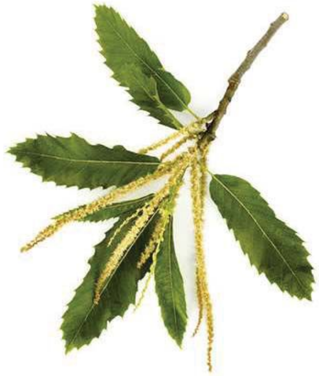

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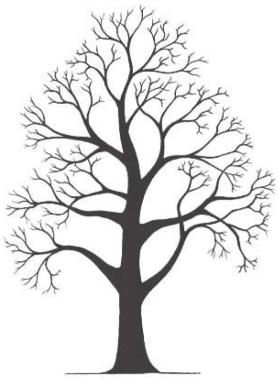

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**1 Bark**
The young bark is greyish-purple and scored with vertical cracks. As the tree ages, these develop into fissures that appear to spiral around the trunk.

**2 Leaves**
The leaves are long (up to 20cm when mature), dark green and serrated. They have a prominent fold at the midrib and veins running parallel to each other.

**3 Nutcases/nuts**
Around October, the edible nuts fall to the ground in green cases covered in long, bendy spines. The casings are distinct from those covering the horse chestnut's conkers, which have short, hard spines.

**4 Flowers/catkins**
Sweet chestnut trees produce both male and female flowers. In June or July, long yellow male catkins appear, with green rosette-like female flowers at their base.

**5 Silhouette**
Sweet chestnuts grow to around 35m in height, and have a broad, rounded crown.

Walnut trees can live to over 200 years and are commonly found in parks and gardens.

# *Juglans regia* walnut

Despite originating in the area from southeast Europe to southwest China, *Juglans regia* is known as the common walnut in Britain, and the English walnut in the USA. We have no real claim to it other than it having grown here for a very long time. No one is exactly sure how and when it arrived, although it was almost certainly before or during Roman times. It is a broad and handsome tree and bears its big, creamy, bitter nuts well in British conditions, although they have traditionally been picked green and pickled as well as eaten mature. Other plants will not grow beneath walnuts, because their fallen leaves and debris contain juglone, a naturally occurring herbicide. Walnuts grow particularly well in deep, fertile soil and in areas with shorter winters. The wood of the walnut tree is extremely beautiful; with its creamy sap wood, dark heartwood and intricate wavy grain, it is much coveted by woodworkers.

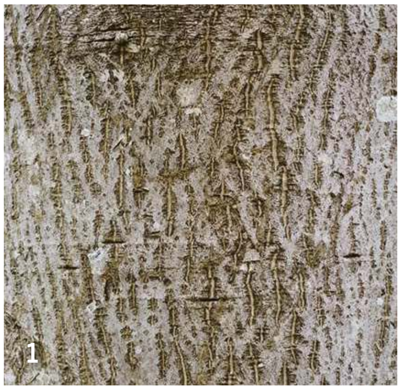
**1 Bark**
Young walnut trees have smooth, greenish-brown bark. As the tree ages, the bark develops fissures and turns a silvery grey colour.

**2 Leaves**
Each leaf has between five and nine leaflets. They are shiny and dark green, and are paired along the leaf stalk, with a single leaf at the end of the stalk.

**3 Nuts**
Green walnut cases can be seen on the tree from midsummer, and can be picked as green walnuts for pickling in July. The nuts ripen and turn woody around October.

**4 Winter twig**
Twigs have horseshoe-shaped leaf scars where the leaves have fallen. Cut a twig open and it has a spongy pith.

**5 Silhouette**
Walnuts form a short trunk and a broad crown when growing in full sun and can reach around 35m.



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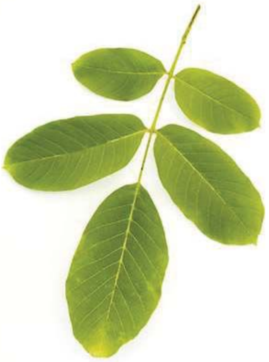

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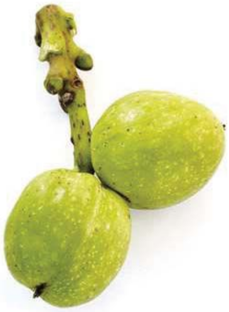

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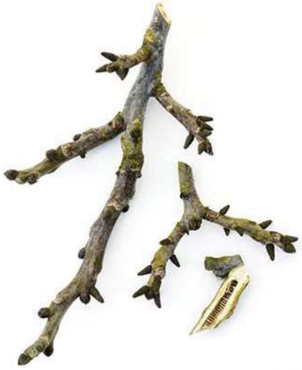

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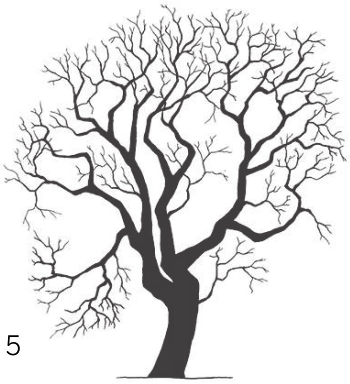

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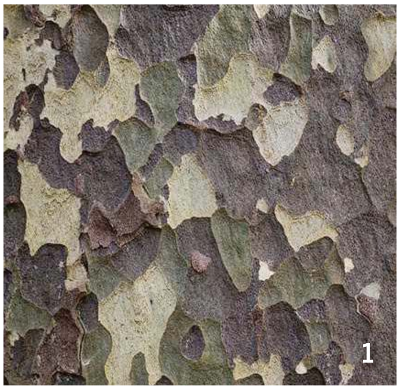

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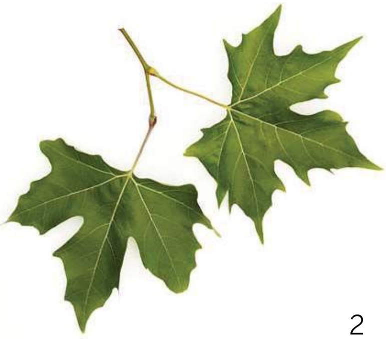

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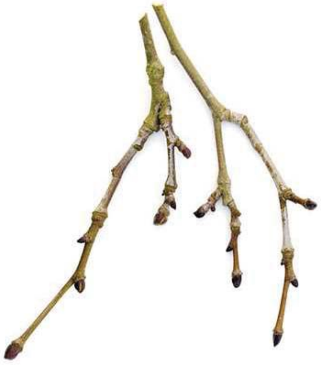

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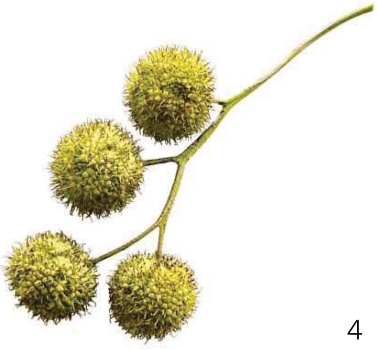

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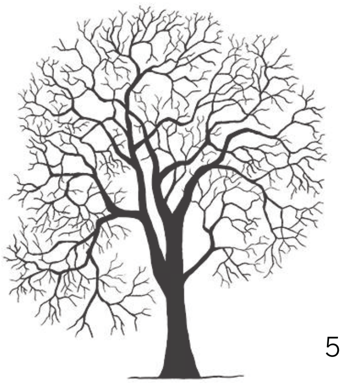

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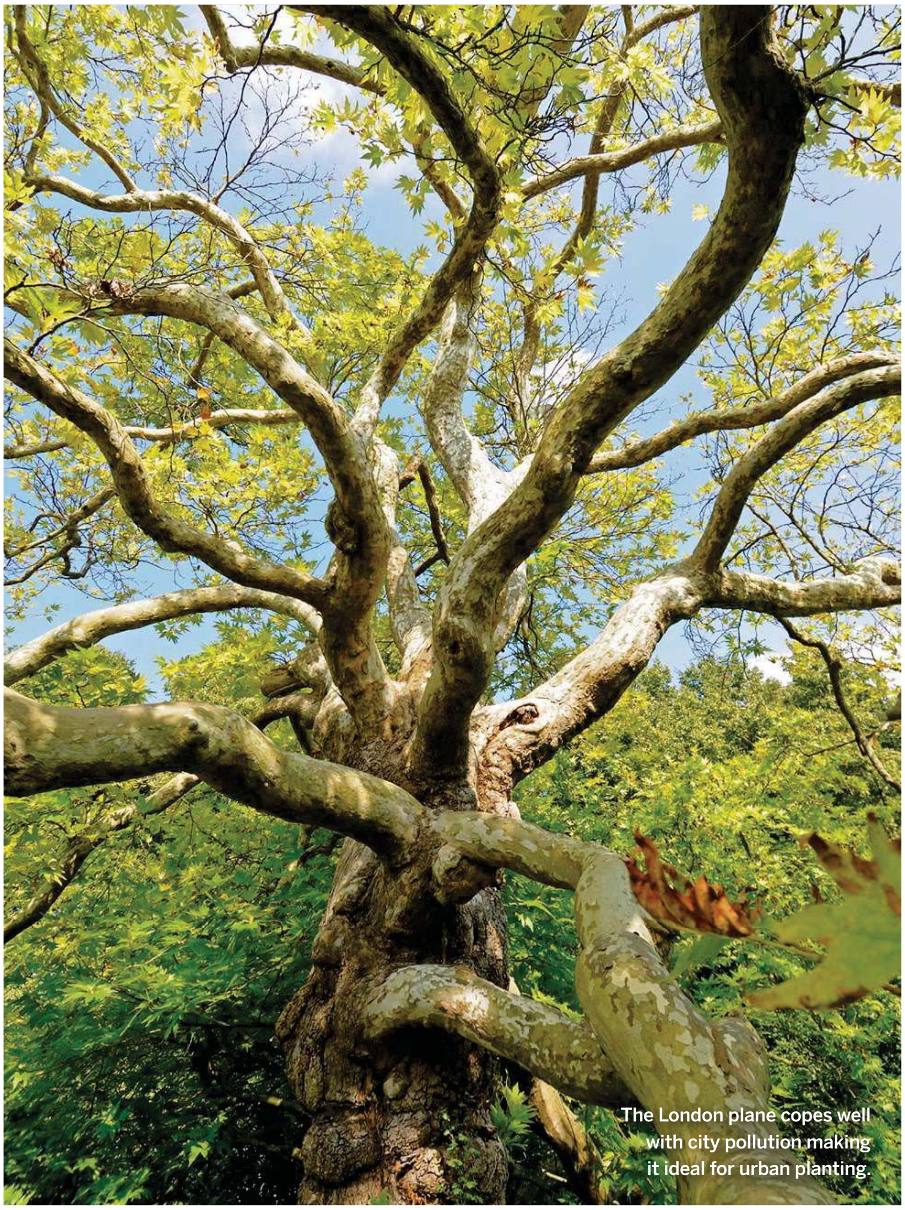


The London plane copes well with city pollution making it ideal for urban planting.

# *Platanus* x *hispanica* London plane

If you live in a city, and particularly in London, the London plane is likely to be the tree you see most often. It is thought to be a hybrid of *Platanus orientalis*, the oriental plane, and *Platanus occidentalis*, the American plane, their seedling discovered in Vauxhall by John Tradescant the younger in the mid 17th century. It has been estimated that the London plane accounts for around half of all the trees in London, and this is partly because it is so happy in urban conditions. Its beautiful bark shrugs off plates all year round, and with it any pollution and deposits that have built up; it requires little root space; and it is very malleable and happy to be pruned, as witnessed in European cities where it is also used in great number but often trained as a shade tree or down the centres of avenues. Trees can live to be hundreds of years old. There is a fine specimen at Bishop's Palace in Ely, planted in the 17th century.

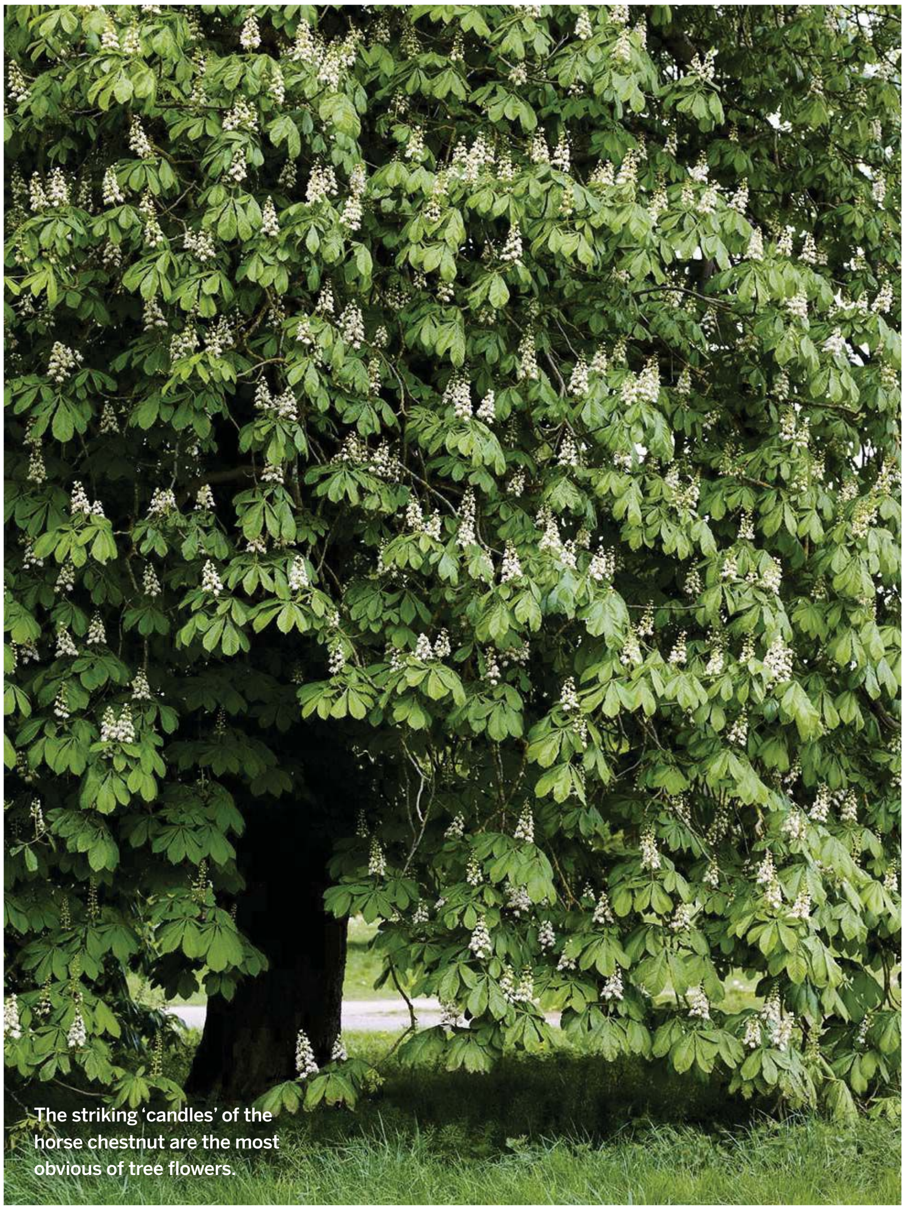
**1 Bark**
The bark has a distinctive camouflage pattern, with plates of brown, grey, mustard yellow and olive green that flake away to reveal new colours as the tree grows.

**2 Leaves**
Leaves are simple and maple-like. When they are forming in spring they produce lots of irritating short hairs called trichome fibres (the cause of the infamous 'Chelsea cough' at the flower show in May).

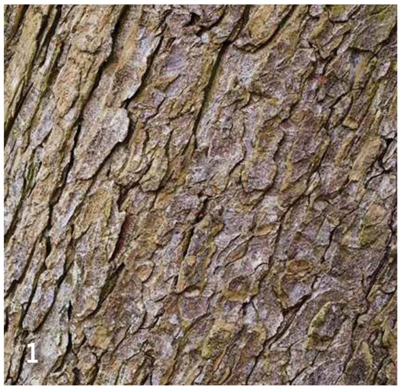
**3 Bud arrangement**
The buds are arranged alternately along the stem. In winter they are smooth, shiny and cone-shaped, and may have a red sheen.

**4 Seed balls**
Perfectly round seed balls hang from the tree in bunches, becoming particularly visible in winter after the leaves drop.

**5 Silhouette**
Tall, with a long, straight trunk and rounded crown. Planes are often pollarded in cities.



The striking 'candles' of the horse chestnut are the most obvious of tree flowers.



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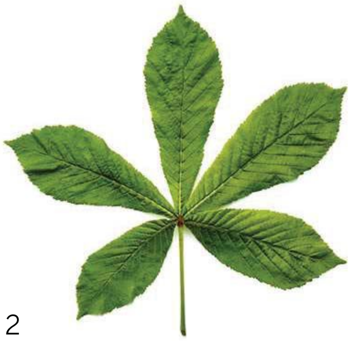

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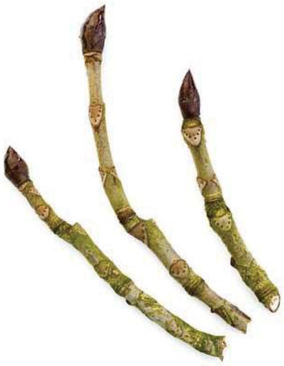

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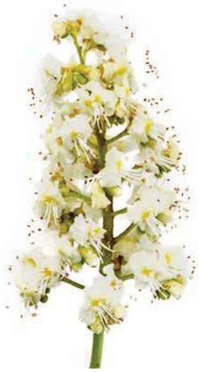

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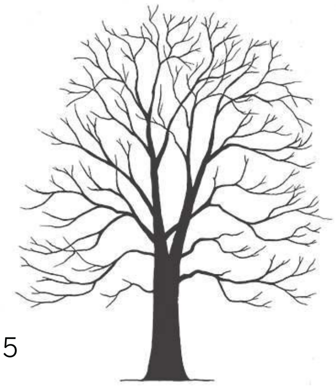

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# *Aesculus hippocastanum* horse chestnut

Horse chestnuts originate in a small area of southeast Europe, but have long been planted in the UK as ornamental trees in parks, large gardens and on village greens, because of their attractive, large, palm-shaped leaves and beautiful displays of pink and white, candle-like flowers in spring. In autumn, of course, they also produce conkers, non-edible nuts that are nonetheless well loved for their potential to be hung on strings, turned into shiny, brown weapons and sent into battle against other conkers. They are big and handsome trees with a spreading habit, but unfortunately in recent years horse chestnuts have been attacked by the leaf-mining moth *Cameraria ohridella*, and from July onwards dry crispy patches start to appear on the leaves, which turn dead looking long before autumn. This threatens their existence as ornamental trees, and we may sadly be seeing fewer of them as the years go by.

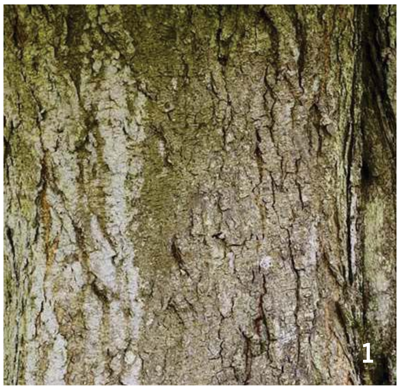
**1 Bark**
The bark is smooth and pinkish-grey when the tree is young. As the tree ages, the bark becomes greyish-green and more scaly, with large, smooth flakes.

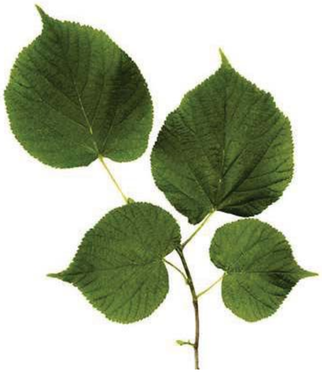
**2 Leaf**
Leaves are large and palm-shaped with between five and seven leaflets, each narrow at the base and becoming broad and rounded towards the tip.

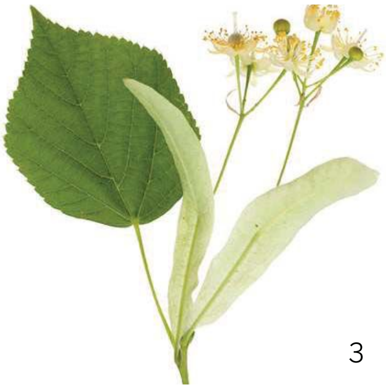
**3 Winter bud**
Buds are arranged in pairs down the stem, with each pair set at an angle of 90 degrees to the previous pair. Look for horseshoe-shaped leaf scars, complete with nail holes.

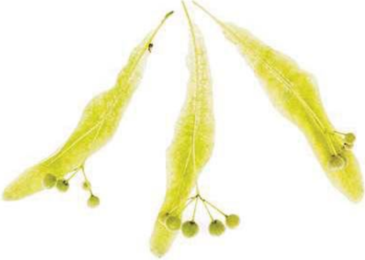
**4 Flower**
Big, dramatic, pink and white 'candles' of flowers are produced all over the tree in May.

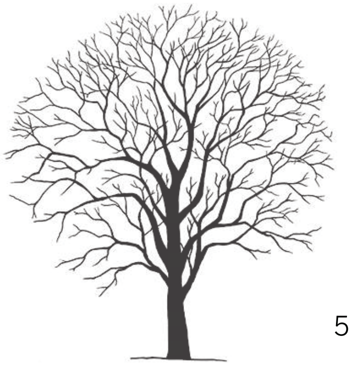
**5 Silhouette**
Grows up to 39m with a domed crown. On older trees, the lower branches often sweep down and curl upwards at the tips.



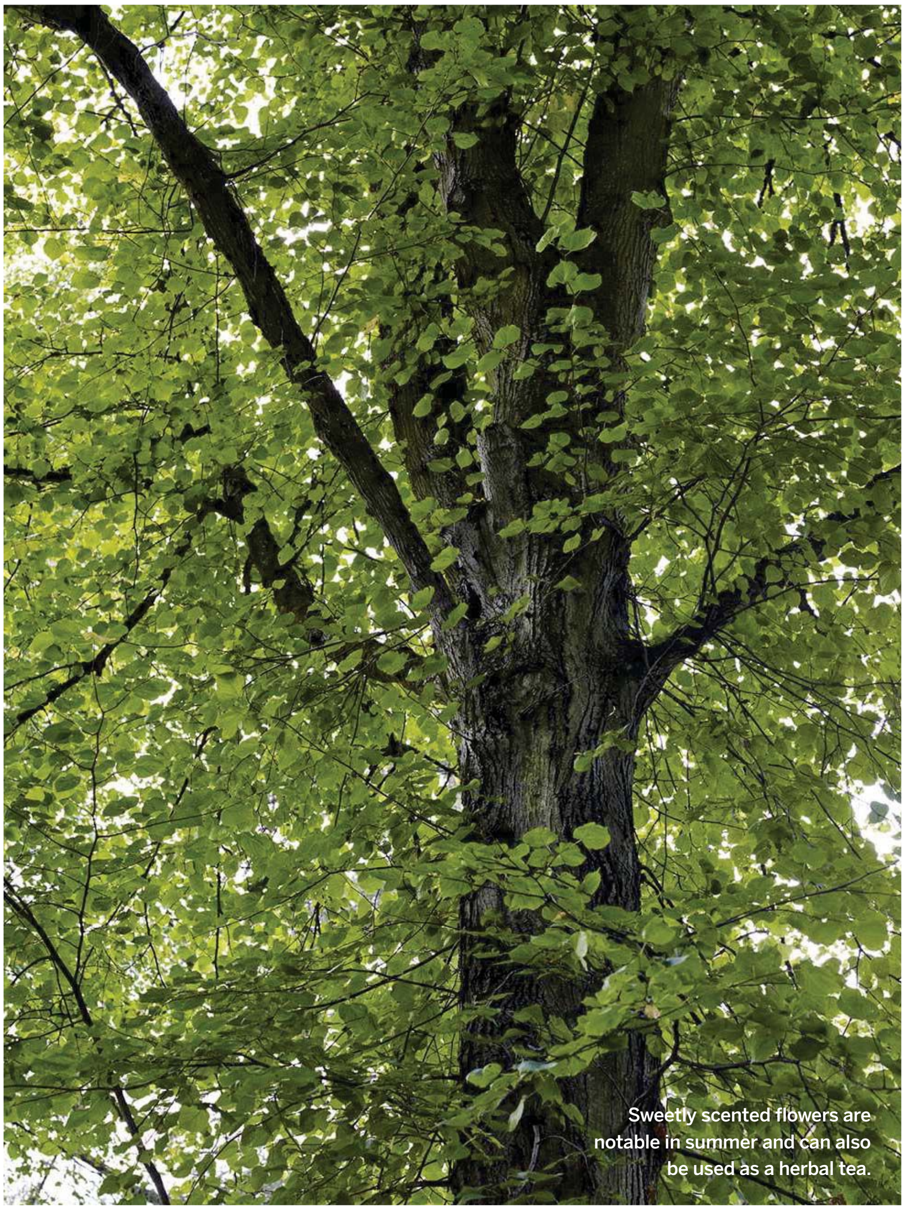








MANY THANKS TO WESTONBIRT, THE NATIONAL ARBORETUM WHERE THE MAJORITY OF THESE IMAGES WERE TAKEN, AND TO WESTONBIRT DENDROLOGIST DAN CROWLEY FOR HIS ASSISTANCE WITH THIS FEATURE



Sweetly scented flowers are notable in summer and can also be used as a herbal tea.

# *Tilia* x *europaea* lime

If you park your car below a tree and return to find it sticky, you have found a lime. The stickiness is excess sap secreted by the many aphids that feast on the leaves but despite this obvious drawback, it is widely planted as a street tree, perhaps because it is easy to propagate and tolerant of pruning: as with London planes it is often pollarded to keep it to size and prevent it from bothering double decker buses. It is also widely found in parks and large gardens, growing unrestricted. Lime is one of the tallest broad-leaved trees you will see in the UK, with bright-green leaves and covered in sweet-scented flowers that attract hundreds of bees in July. Common lime is a naturally occurring hybrid between small-leaved lime *Tilia cordata*, and large-leaved lime *Tilia platyphyllos* and it occurs in the wild wherever both trees grow. Limes are also known as lindens, a name often reflected in street names.

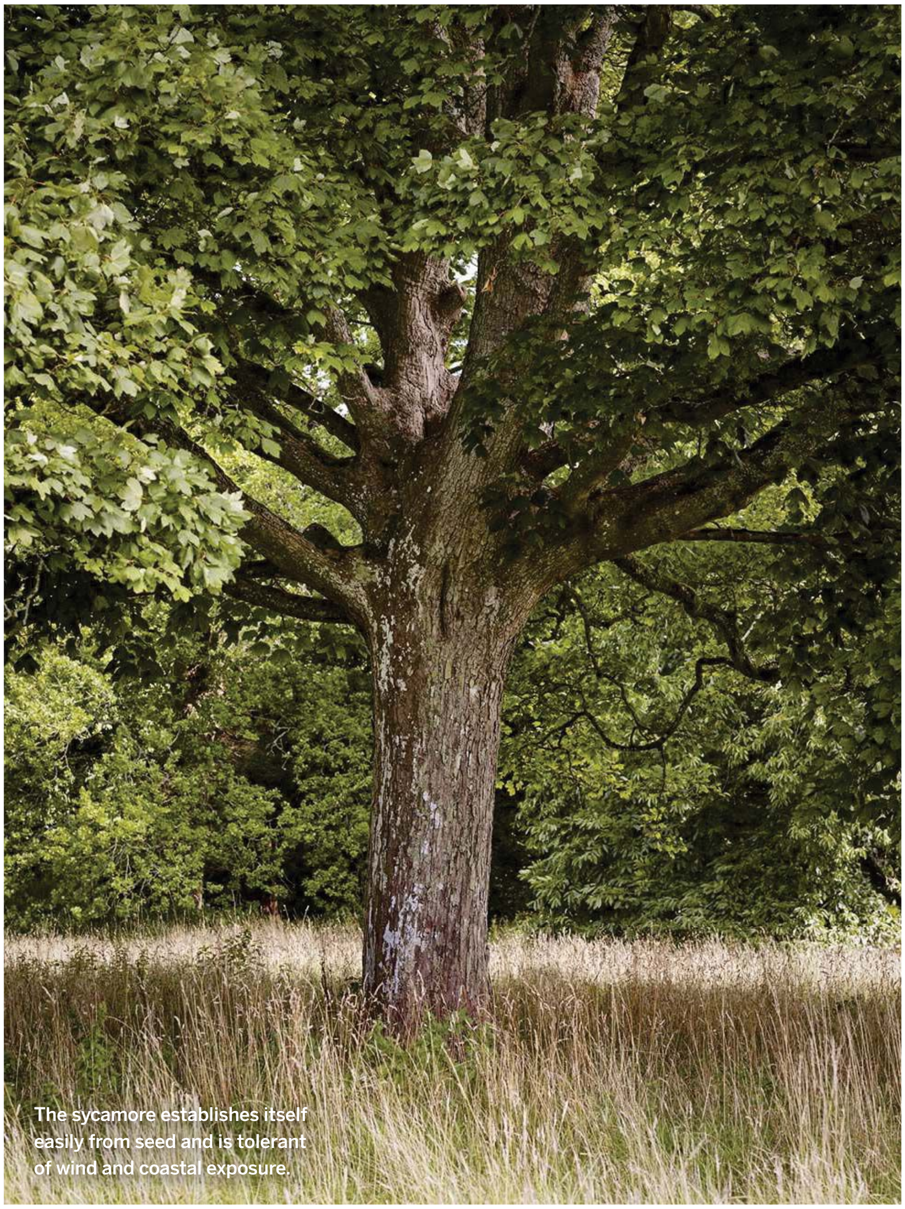
**1 Bark**
The young twigs are reddish-brown and hairy towards the ends, with reddish-brown buds in winter. On mature trees the bark is grey with dark grey fissures.

**2 Leaves**
The leaves are mid-green, supple and delicate with a lop-sided heart shape. On the back there are tufts of hairs in the leaf axils.

**3 Flowers**
Flowers are attached to a light-green, leaf-like bract. They hang in bunches and have five yellowish-white petals with long stamens. The blossom can be used to make a herbal tea.

**4 Fruits**
Once the flowers have been pollinated they turn into round, pale-green, one-seeded fruits.

**5 Silhouette**
A tall and columnar tree, often with a mass of burrs and brushwood emerging from low down on the trunk. Grows up to 50m in height.



The sycamore establishes itself easily from seed and is tolerant of wind and coastal exposure.

## *Acer pseudoplatanus* sycamore

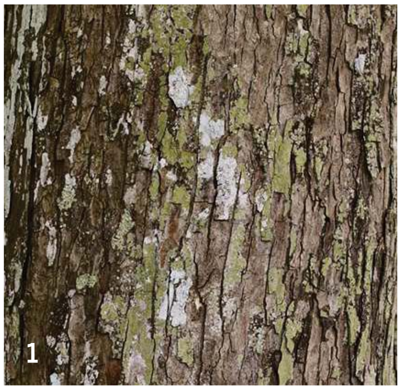
Sycamores are perhaps the least loved of our big trees. They produce a great many seeds, which germinate readily and grow quickly, and their heavy leaf fall smothers plants growing below. For these reasons, they are often regarded as weeds, and are chopped down or rooted out. In spring, the sycamore has attractive reddish foliage that emerges from bright-red buds, but unfortunately it does not share the vibrant autumn colouring of other members of the acer family. The foliage is also often marred in summer by tar spot, *Rhytisma acerinum*, which covers the leaves in black blotches but appears to do nothing to slow the tree's extreme vigour. On the plus side, sycamore – which originated in southern Europe and has been grown in the UK since the 1500s and naturalised here since the 1800s – is very tolerant of sea spray, and can grow well in coastal situations where few other broad-leaved trees will thrive.

**1 Bark**
The bark of the sycamore is a lovely, smooth pinkish-grey when the tree is young. As the tree ages, it develops into shaggy plates in shades of pink, brown and grey.

**2 Leaves**
The palm-shaped leaves have five lobes. The surface of the leaves is often marked by tar spot, or pitted with the bright-red galls of the sycamore gall mite *Eriophyes macrorhynchus,* although these hard, raised structures often do not cause serious damage.

**3&4 Keys**
The winged seeds are borne in pairs and called keys or double samaras. They are bright green at first, turning woody and brown by autumn, when they flutter to the ground in a helicopter motion.

**5 Silhouette**
Tall with upwards-reaching limbs and a broad, rounded crown. The sycamore grows to about 35m and can live to around 400 years.



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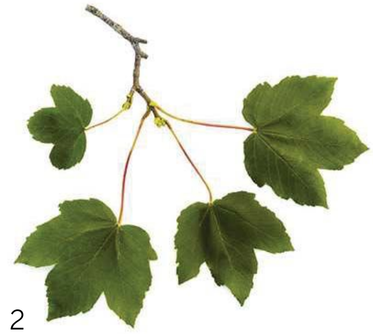

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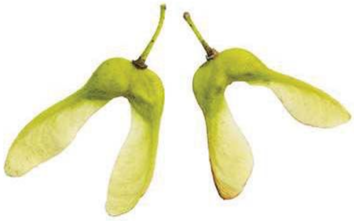

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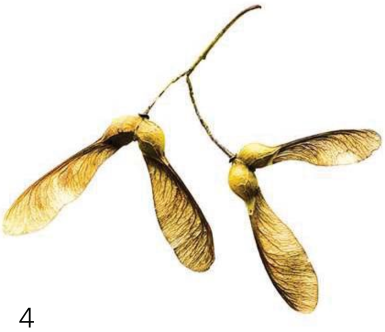

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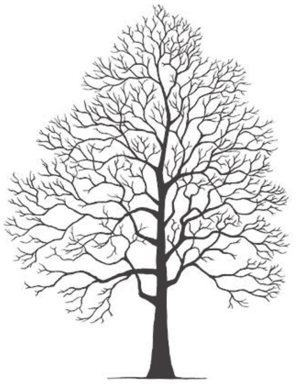

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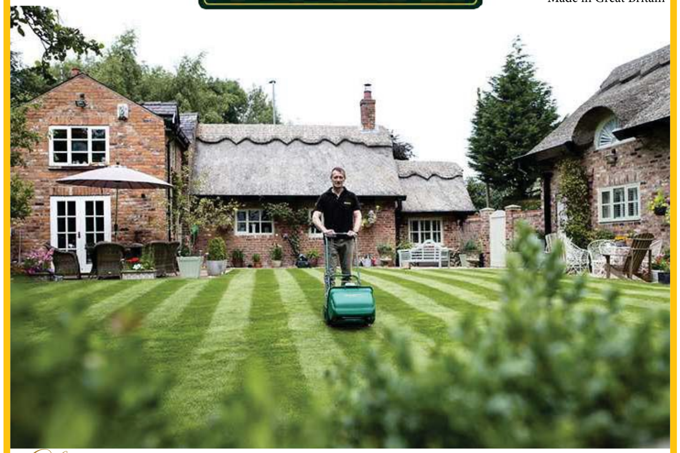

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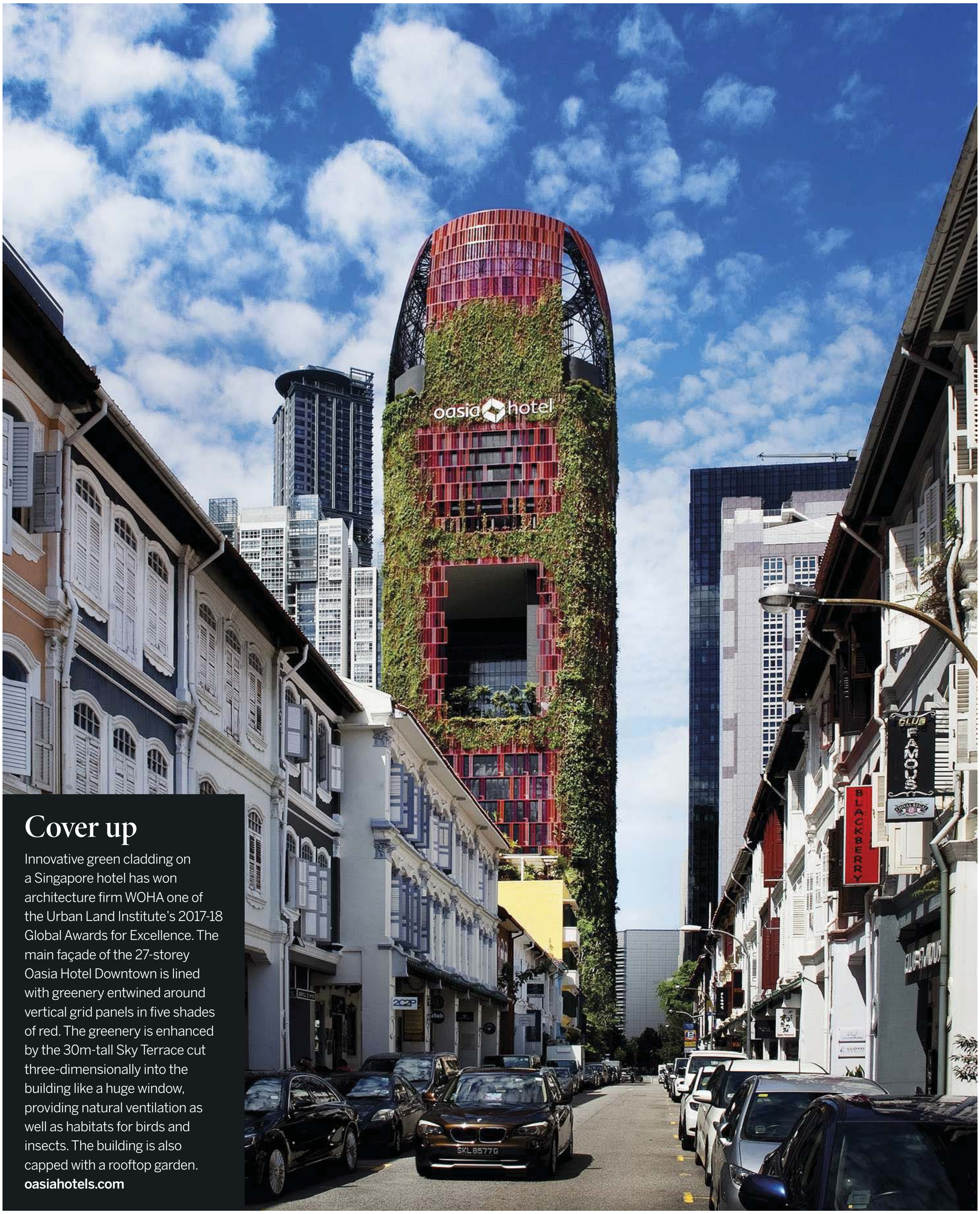
# DESIGN

*News, ideas and sourcebook*



## Cover up

Innovative green cladding on a Singapore hotel has won architecture firm WOHA one of the Urban Land Institute's 2017-18 Global Awards for Excellence. The main façade of the 27-storey Oasia Hotel Downtown is lined with greenery entwined around vertical grid panels in five shades of red. The greenery is enhanced by the 30m-tall Sky Terrace cut three-dimensionally into the building like a huge window, providing natural ventilation as well as habitats for birds and insects. The building is also capped with a rooftop garden. **oasiahotels.com**

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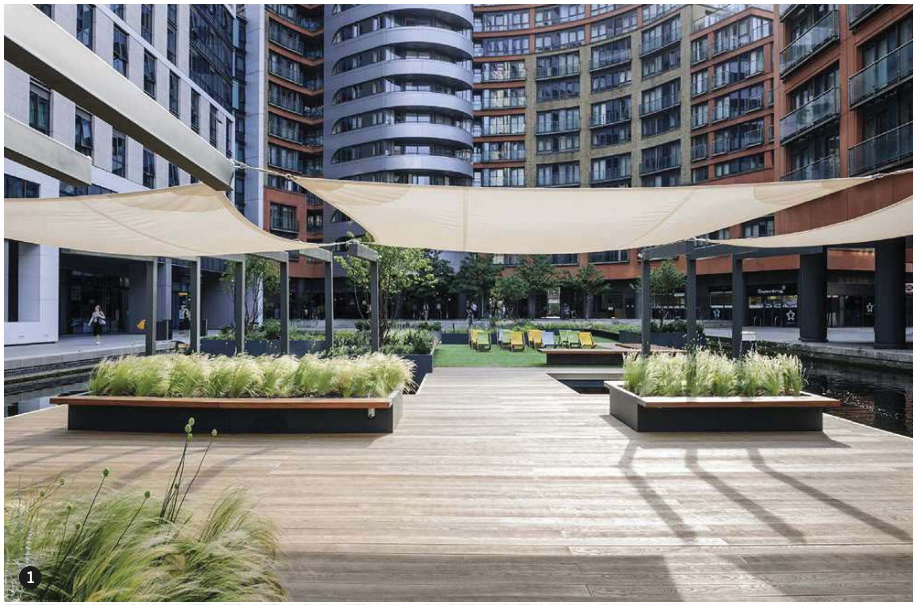
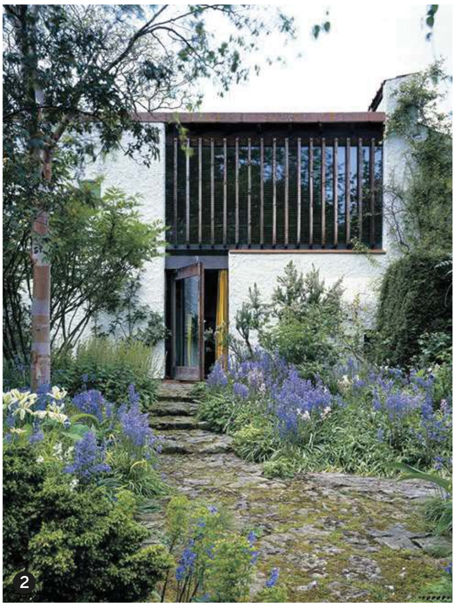
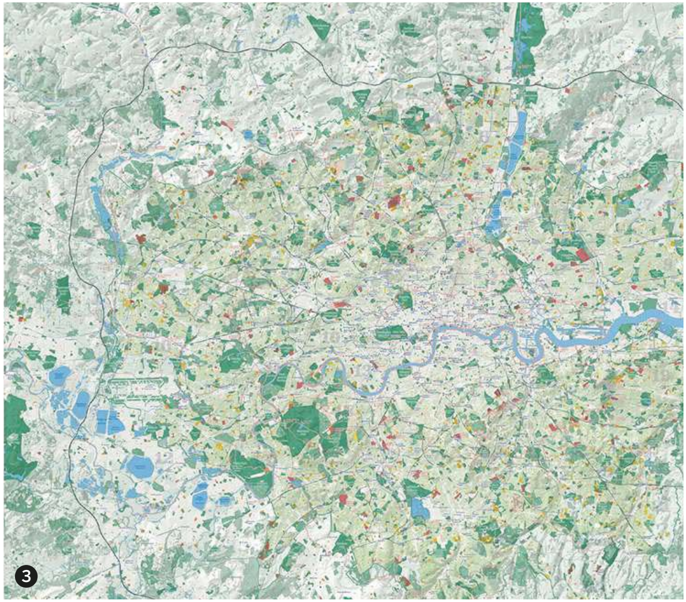
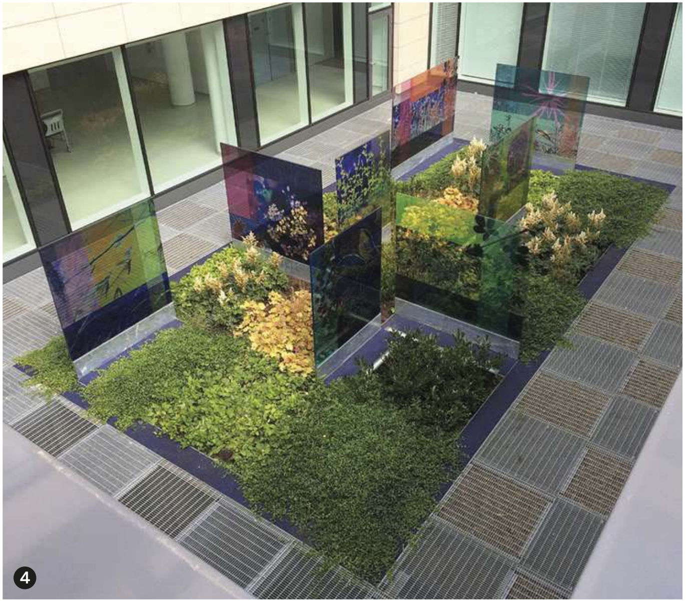
# NEWS

COMPILED BY ANNIE GATTI









JASON INGRAM, RICHARD BRYANT; ARCAID.CO.UK, CHARLIE PEEL; URBAN GOOD, ULSTER HOSPITAL INPATIENT WARD BLOCK © GILLESPIES

## ① FLOATING PARK AWARD

The UK's first floating pocket park, made from linked pontoons, has won the Special Award for Design and Build and the Principal Award for Community and Schools Development in the 2017 BALI National Landscape Awards. The park at Merchant Square in London's Paddington Basin was devised and installed by Garden Club, London, and has already become a popular outdoor space for the local community, as well as for office workers and tourists. The park features decked areas, open lawn areas, communal seating and densely planted, nectar-rich mixed raised borders. **baliawards.co.uk**

## ② LISTED GARDEN

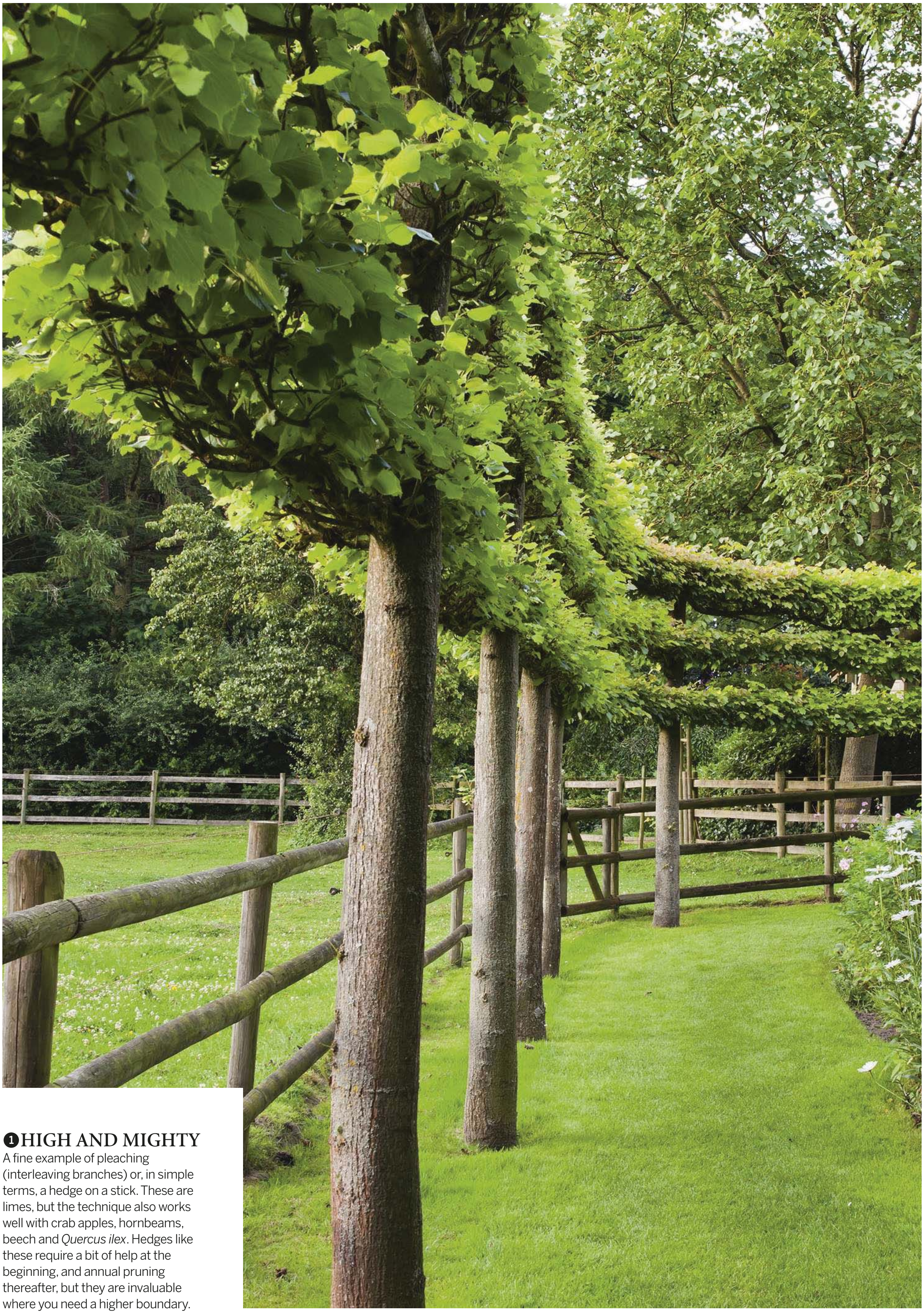
Turn End Garden in Haddenham, Buckinghamshire, the private garden of architect Peter Aldington, has been given Grade II listed status by Historic England. Although less than an acre in size, the garden is rich in unexpected angles and vistas and has been designed to create the illusion of a bigger space. The house, one of a cluster of three RIBA award-winning houses designed by the architect, is Grade II* listed making it one of only two post war examples where both house and garden are listed. It opens to the public, 28-29 April, 2pm-5pm, and Aldington will be talking about the integration of building and garden design at the house on 26 April. **turnend.org.uk**

## ③ GREEN MAP

A new map revealing all of London's 3,000 parks and other green spaces has given a boost to the campaign to make London the world's first National Park City. Created by Urban Good CIC, the map shows the capital's parks, woodlands, playing fields, nature reserves, city farms, rivers, canals, private gardens and all spaces that contribute to London's parkland, and reveals that contrary to most people's assumptions almost half of London is either green or blue. The National Park City campaign aims to increase this percentage and hopes to connect all children living in the capital to nature. **nationalparkcity.org, urbangood.org**

## ④ HOSPITAL DESIGN AWARD

Green spaces designed by landscape architecture practice Gillespies for the Inpatient Ward Block at Belfast's Ulster Hospital have helped the redevelopment project win Best External Environment at the 2017 Building Better Healthcare Awards. Gillespies designed the internal courtyards and outdoor spaces, including roof terraces, creating strong linear planting designs in a range of heights, textures and colours, for the areas close to the buildings. Towards the site's boundary the predominantly native planting becomes more informal in character. **buildingbetterhealthcare.co.uk**



**①HIGH AND MIGHTY**
A fine example of pleaching (interleaving branches) or, in simple terms, a hedge on a stick. These are limes, but the technique also works well with crab apples, hornbeams, beech and *Quercus ilex*. Hedges like these require a bit of help at the beginning, and annual pruning thereafter, but they are invaluable where you need a higher boundary.

1 ROBERT MABIC / GAP PHOTOS, DESIGN DINA DEFERME

# HEDGES

*Domestic hedges are more than just dividing lines; they can be ornamental in their own right. James Alexander-Sinclair considers the options, depending on your taste and situation*

WORDS JAMES ALEXANDER-SINCLAIR

Where would our gardens be without hedges? They are our boundaries, our walls, our dividing screens, our guardians, our supports and our skeletons. In spring they burst into fresh clean growth, in summer they shelter nesting birds and provide a solid background for our borders, and in winter they carry the snow and give architecture to our frosted gardens. To answer my own question, therefore, we would be up the creek and in the soup.

The history of the hedge is one of protection rather than ornamentation, beginning when man evolved enough to keep animals. It was generally considered a bad idea to have your sheep/goats/cattle/horses/children wandering off unchallenged, so the field boundary hedge was invented. Initially, it was formed from thorny branches cut from nearby trees, but in time this evolved into a living hedge that could be laid to make a barrier through which even the most devious sheep could not escape. This idea was eventually extended from the field to the domestic garden. I have done a little survey of the hedges I have seen in various gardens over the past few weeks, and there are many different types. To make things simpler, I have divided them up into various categories.

**James Alexander-Sinclair** is a garden designer, writer, broadcaster and founder of into-gardens.com. He has served on the RHS Council for the past five years.

First, the agricultural hedge: this includes hawthorn, blackthorn, wild rose, dogwoods and such like. These make for a beefy hedge that's fine for a field edge or large space, but a bad idea in a small garden. Field hedges are normally 60 per cent hawthorn and 40 per cent other species, but if you reverse the proportions and include more decorative plants among the thorn, it makes for a much prettier variation. You could also add some raspberries or a couple of climbers to make it even more exciting, but it will still be unsuitable for a smaller garden.

In the white tie and tails category are the formal hedges and, of these, the very best is yew (*Taxus baccata*), a rich, dark green that is relatively simple to clip and a fabulous foil to pretty much any plant of any colour. People worry that it is very slow growing, but, to be frank, this is tosh as it will have presence and heft within five or six years. Box, once ubiquitous, has fallen out of favour since the appearance of box blight and box caterpillar, and none of the alternatives is quite as good – it's like being fobbed off with Angel Delight when what you really wanted was a fine crème brulée. Beech is another good one – or hornbeam if your ground is wet over winter. Privet, the suburban stalwart, also scrubs up well, and its flowers smell great. Its problem is one of over-eagerness in that it grows all the time and needs about three or four cuts a year. Oh, and holly – don't forget the holly.

Next is the repent at leisure hedge, notably the Leyland cypress, which has been planted in countless gardens by well-intentioned people whose only wish is to block out the neighbours. They are innocents in a world of horticultural depravity, because before long their cute little hedge is a towering, soil-sucking monster – almost never a good idea. Laurel is fine provided it has enough space to sprawl: if it doesn't (and I speak from experience), you have a lot of chopping ahead of you.

Finally, the wildcards: shrubs that don't mind having hedginess (or hedgemony) thrust upon them. Many roses (especially the rugosas) make excellent hedges. *Viburnum tinus* is also good, and bamboos if you want something upright and rustly. I made an excellent hedge out of *Miscanthus*, which swoops and waves in the breeze, although it's pretty ineffectual in the winter. *Osmanthus* is evergreen and scented, *Berberis* is colourful and usefully spiny, and both *Escallonia* and *Griselinia* are effective in coastal gardens. *Photinia* is all right if you like ugly plants, lavender good if you need something low and scented – although in that situation I would always plump for rosemary, as it is less of a cliché.

No matter what your personal taste or size of garden, everybody's life is happier with a hedge. Apart from anything else, hedge clipping is one of the best jobs there is – it combines patience, precision, very sharp tools and healthy exercise. The effect is pretty immediate and my goodness it looks good. □

**NEXT MONTH** The humble parking space.

## HEDGING EXAMPLES TO VISIT

Not many people visit gardens just to look at hedges, but it can be worth checking out the opposition. For eccentricity, there's **Rockingham Castle**'s elephant hedge (rockinghamcastle.com), and for sheer scale you can't beat the monumental 14m-high yews at **Powis Castle** (nationaltrust.org.uk/powis-castle-and-garden). **Chatsworth House** has a magnificent serpentine beech hedge that weaves its way up the hill (chatsworth.org/garden). The Grade II-listed hedged gardens of **Hill Close, Warwick**, maintained by volunteers, show how merchants in the town used to live (hillclosegardens.com). All of the **RHS Gardens** have a good range of hedges. RHS Wisley even has a garden dedicated to alternatives to the blight-troubled box hedging (rhs.org.uk).

If you'd rather not leave the comfort of your own home, there's plenty of hedge-based reading to be found, including the following:
***Hedge Britannia: A Curious History of a British Obsession*** by Hugh Barker (Bloomsbury, 2013).
***A Natural History of the Hedgerow: And Ditches, Dykes and Dry Stone Walls*** by John Wright (Profile, 2017).
***The Brambly Hedge Complete Collection*** by Jill Barklem (Harper Collins, 2015) – not much to do with gardens, but nonetheless utterly charming.

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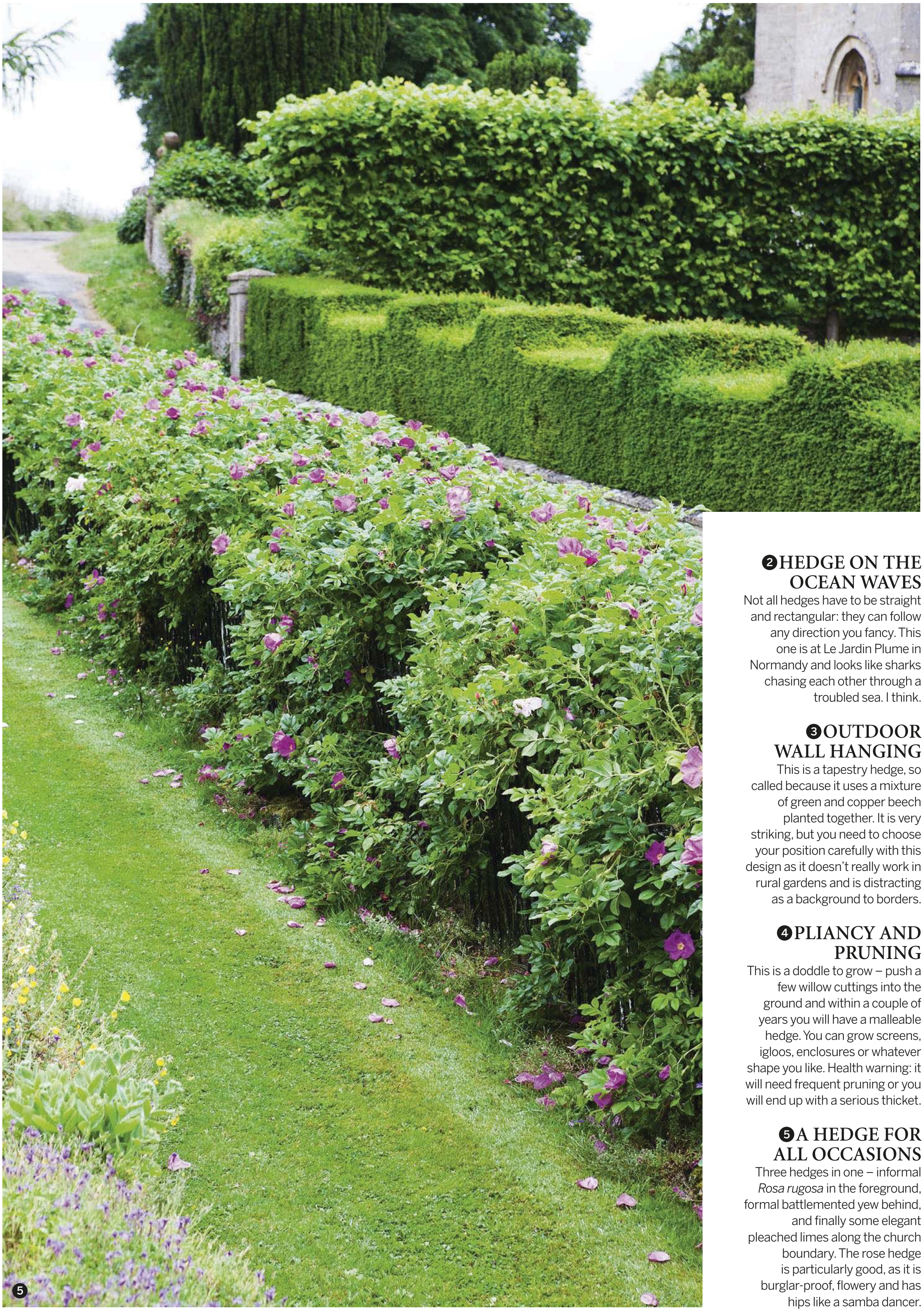
2 CHARLES HAWES / GAP PHOTOS; 3 LEE AVISON / GAP PHOTOS; 4 FHF GREENMEDIA / GAP PHOTOS.



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5 CHARLES HAWES / GAP PHOTOS

## ❷HEDGE ON THE OCEAN WAVES

Not all hedges have to be straight and rectangular: they can follow any direction you fancy. This one is at Le Jardin Plume in Normandy and looks like sharks chasing each other through a troubled sea. I think.

## ❸OUTDOOR WALL HANGING

This is a tapestry hedge, so called because it uses a mixture of green and copper beech planted together. It is very striking, but you need to choose your position carefully with this design as it doesn't really work in rural gardens and is distracting as a background to borders.

## ❹PLIANCY AND PRUNING

This is a doddle to grow – push a few willow cuttings into the ground and within a couple of years you will have a malleable hedge. You can grow screens, igloos, enclosures or whatever shape you like. Health warning: it will need frequent pruning or you will end up with a serious thicket.

## ❺A HEDGE FOR ALL OCCASIONS

Three hedges in one – informal *Rosa rugosa* in the foreground, formal battlemented yew behind, and finally some elegant pleached limes along the church boundary. The rose hedge is particularly good, as it is burglar-proof, flowery and has hips like a samba dancer.

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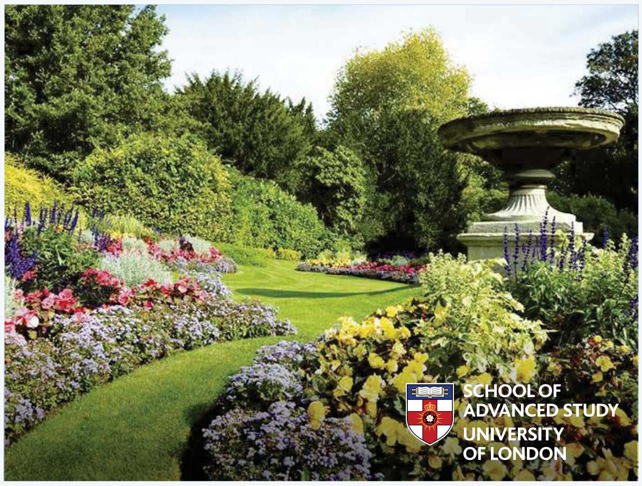

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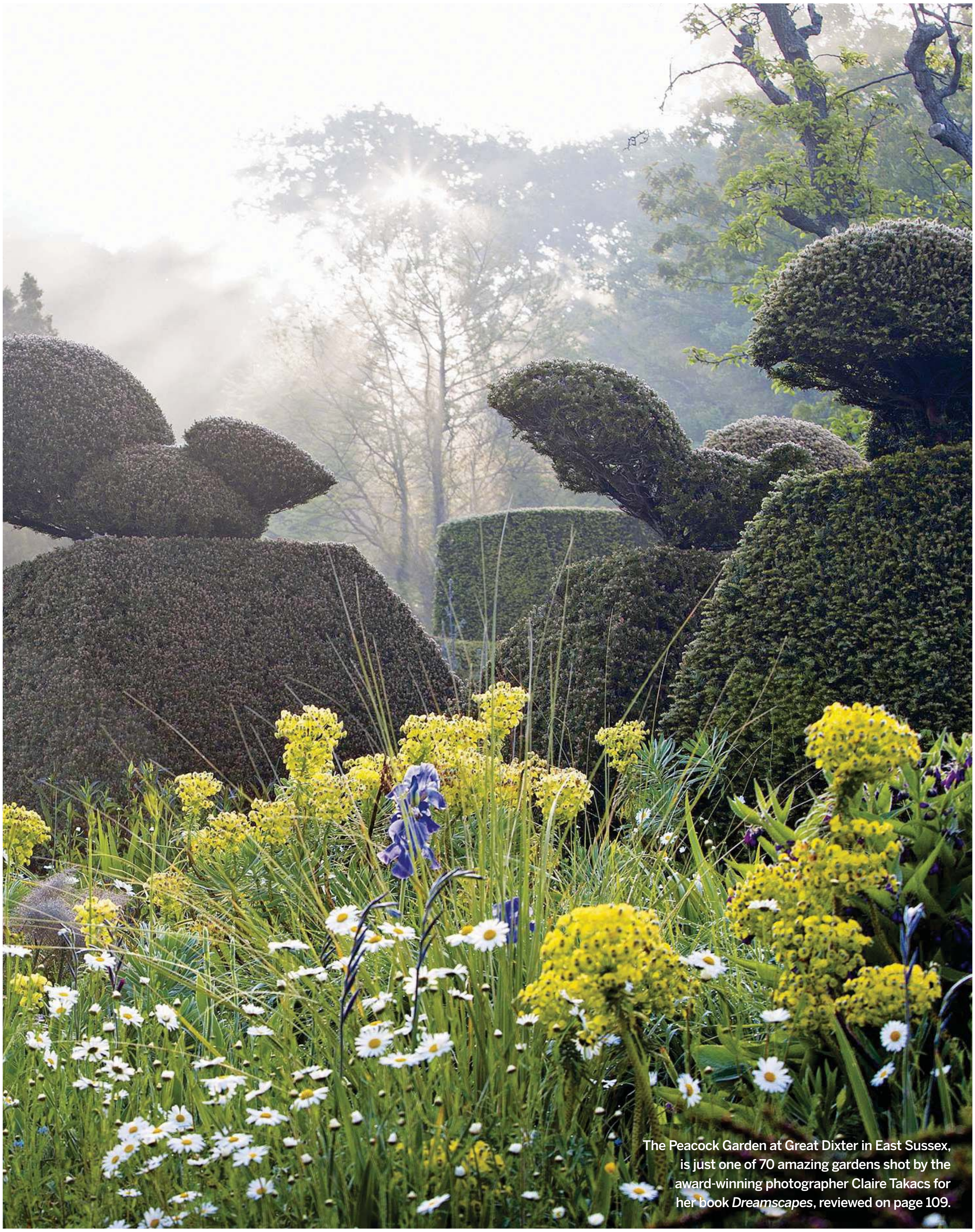
# DOWNTOOLS

*Book reviews, reader offer, crossword, back issues*



CLAIRE TAKACS

The Peacock Garden at Great Dixter in East Sussex, is just one of 70 amazing gardens shot by the award-winning photographer Claire Takacs for her book *Dreamscapes*, reviewed on page 109.

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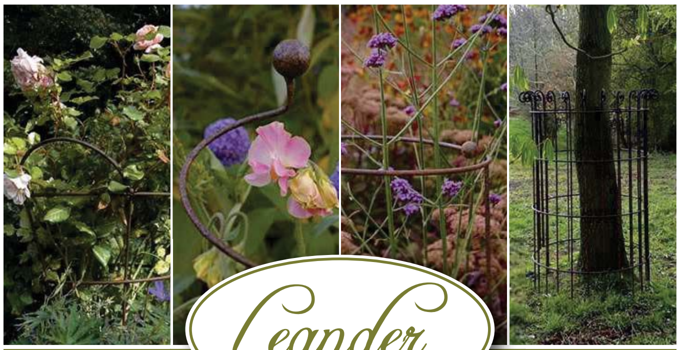

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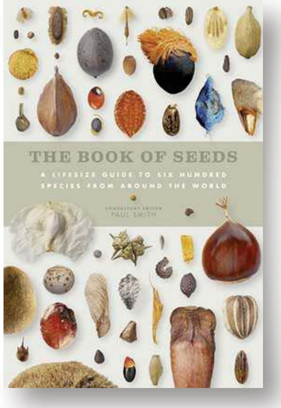


**THE BOOK OF SEEDS: A LIFE-SIZE GUIDE TO SIX HUNDRED SPECIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD**
Consultant editor Paul Smith
Ivy Press, £30

ISBN 978-1782405207

Written by expert botanists and biologists, the book is a beautifully illustrated overview of the importance and diversity of seeds.

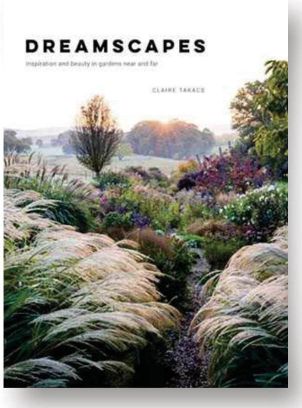
*Reviewer John Hoyland is a plantsman and garden writer.*

*The Book of Seeds* is an engrossing account of the importance of seeds and how they have evolved since they first appeared over 240 million years ago. As a source of food, as a means of climate regulation and even as flood defence, seeds are essential to the survival of life on earth.

It's the work of a group of writers, scientists and researchers associated with Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) under the editorship of Paul Smith, the organisation's secretary general. It focuses on 600 plant species that represent a cross-section of the hundreds of thousands of seed-bearing plants, chosen for their value to humans, their scientific importance, their rarity, their distinct colour or shape, or their curious natural history. The result is a compelling account of one of the fundamental elements of the ecology of our planet.

There are short, informative chapters on the biology and evolution of seeds, their role in human development, how seeds are conserved and the importance of maintaining plant diversity. Although written by experts, the writing is clear and accessible to the general reader.

The bulk of the book consists of full-page descriptions of each of the 600 species, along with details of similar or related species. Each plant's habitat, conservation status and the seed's dispersal mechanism is detailed and a map shows the plant's distribution. A botanical illustration or engraving illustrates the mature plant, while the enlarged photographs reveal the beauty, complexity and occasional bizarreness of seeds. The designers deserve credit for creating a layout that, although packed with information, is clean, clear and attractive.



**DREAMSCAPES: INSPIRATION AND BEAUTY IN GARDENS NEAR AND FAR**
by Claire Takacs
Hardie Grant Books, £35

ISBN 978-1743793527

An eclectic selection of gardens from Australia, the USA, Europe and Asia, seen through the eyes of an award-winning photographer.

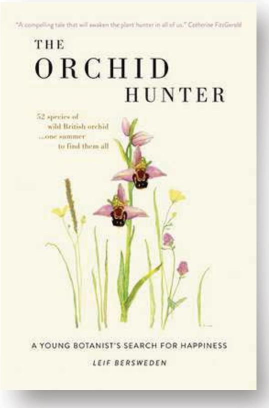
*Reviewer Jodie Jones is a garden writer.*

For almost a decade readers of *Gardens Illustrated* have enjoyed a privileged view of some of the world's most beautiful gardens, as seen through the expressive lens of Claire Takacs's camera.

The first garden in the book, Cloudehill, is an Arts and Crafts-inspired masterpiece just down the road from her family home in Victoria, Australia, and was the catalyst that ignited her passion for garden photography. But, she has discovered many other exceptional creations through an extensive network of relationships between gardeners, designers and nursery owners that blur international boundaries and make the world of horticulture richer. A visit to photograph Daniel J Hinkley's garden at Windcliff resulted in him introducing Takacs to Martha Stewart's summer garden. Her friendship with landscape designer Thomas Gooch led her to visit the Lavender Garden in Spain created by designers Miguel Urquijo and Renate Kastner, who crossed paths with Gooch at Great Dixter. Noel Kingsbury's name crops up on many pages, and the gardens she showcases are largely in the New Perennial style he champions.

Takacs's misty, magical style certainly shows off a back-lit stand of *Miscanthus* to great effect, and Piet Oudolf's own garden is included, but she roams stylistically as well as geographically. While primarily an inspiring coffee table book, this is also a fascinating insight into the life of a garden photographer, the hard slog of 16-hour drives and pre-dawn alarm clocks, and the fleeting moments of magic that make it all worthwhile. 'I know the light is good when I am actually running around a garden, following its first rays and trying to capture this softness.'

# BOOK REVIEWS


THE
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52 species of wild British orchid ...one summer to find them all
A YOUNG BOTANIST'S SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS
LEIF BERSWEDEN

**THE ORCHID HUNTER: A YOUNG BOTANIST'S SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS**
by Leif Bersweden
Short Books, £12.99

ISBN 978-1780723341

Gentle adventure for dark evenings and armchair botanists about a young man's desire to capture a summer of orchid flowers.

*Reviewer Alys Fowler is a garden writer and horticulturist.*

Our native flora is mostly a quiet, almost humble affair; there are intricacy and charms aplenty, once you delve into it, to fall in love with. But when you're first starting out with botanising, it's easy to see why people fall hard for the more flashy or flamboyant floras of the tropics, southern Africa or the Mediterranean or the heroics of high montane. However, there is a corner of our flora that is thrilling, feels exotic, clings to the rare habitats, is fleeting and carries all the chase needed for a summer fling. That is our native terrestrial orchids. Anyone who has ever sunk to their knees in damp grass to marvel at the perfection of a bee orchid or wonder at the delicacy of the *Dactylorhiza* knows of these joys.

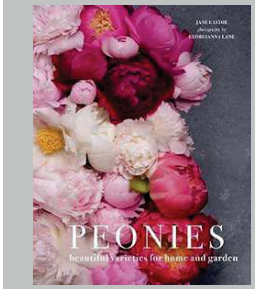
Thus, the premise of this charming book is to take in as many of these orchids as possible in a single summer. There are 56 listed species, but some, such as the ghost orchid, are so elusive and sadly some, such as the summer's lady tresses, extinct in the UK that Bersweden sensibly draws the line at 52 and then persuades his parents that running around the country courting these orchids is as sensible as going to some far-flung destination for his gap year.

Thus, begins this youthful tale of a summer of orchid love. Bersweden is everything you'd expect from a young man on the cusp of adulthood: enthusiastic impatient, competitive, naïve, joyful and delightfully nerdy. Through his eye the orchids flit, flirt and flourish, it's a compelling journey, lovingly detailed, as fine an account as any.

In a world where botany undergraduates are no more, and our native habitats squeezed and stripped, this work of capturing a summer in such detail is not to be understated.

## Other books

From eye-catching blooms and garden planning to herbal recipes and historic tales, here are five new titles to enjoy.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**PEONIES: BEAUTIFUL VARIETIES FOR HOME AND GARDEN**
by Jane Eastoe, photographs by Georgianna Lane
Timber Press, £21.99
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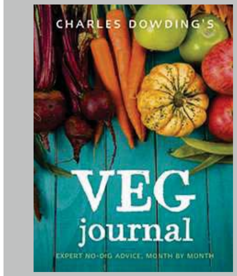
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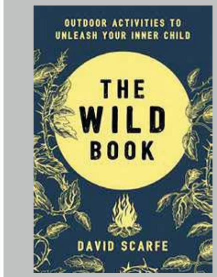
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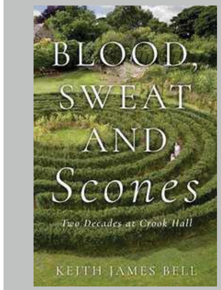
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KEITH JAMES BELL

**BLOOD, SWEAT AND SCONES: TWO DECADES AT CROOK HALL**
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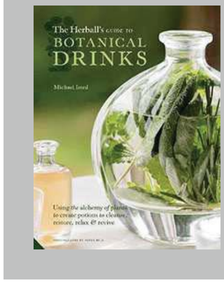
The Herball's GUIDE TO
BOTANICAL DRINKS
Michael Isted

**THE HERBALL'S GUIDE TO BOTANICAL DRINKS**
by Michael Isted
Jacqui Small, £20
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A history on the alchemy and use of plants as herbal remedies with DIY recipes.

# READER OFFERS

## 15% off plants, bulbs and seeds at crocus.co.uk

Every issue we aim to give you plenty of planting inspiration – but in February we go all out to promote the gardening year and the approach of spring with our 100 must-have plants feature (see page 37). This year designer Sarah Price has made the selection. Renowned for her painterly, romantic planting schemes, her selection offers lots of ideas to pick and choose from.

To help get any new planting ideas sorted, online nursery **Crocus.co.uk** is offering readers a 15 per cent discount across its plant, bulb and seed range.

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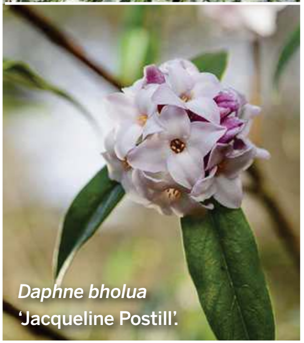
### PLEASE NOTE

Offer valid for plants, bulbs and seed only featured on crocus.co.uk. All plants are subject to availability. Offer excludes all garden products and machinery as well as gift vouchers and delivery. Discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Code can only be used once per customer. While Crocus stocks a large range of plants, it doesn't necessarily stock all 100 of Sarah Price's selection. To find suppliers of specific cultivars, please use the RHS Plant Finder book or **rhs.org.uk/plants/search-form** to locate alternative suppliers.

JASON INGRAM; RACHEL WARNE; JULIE PIGULA AND CLARE GAINEY / BOTH ALAMY STOCK PHOTO.

*Echinacea pallida.*

*Cyclamen hederifolium.*



*Daphne bholua* 'Jacqueline Postill'.

*Tricyrtis formosana* 'Dark Beauty'.

*Echium vulgare.*

*Fritillaria meleagris.*

*Sanguisorba officinalis* 'Red Thunder'.

*Phacelia tanacetifolia.*

*Nectaroscordum siculum.*

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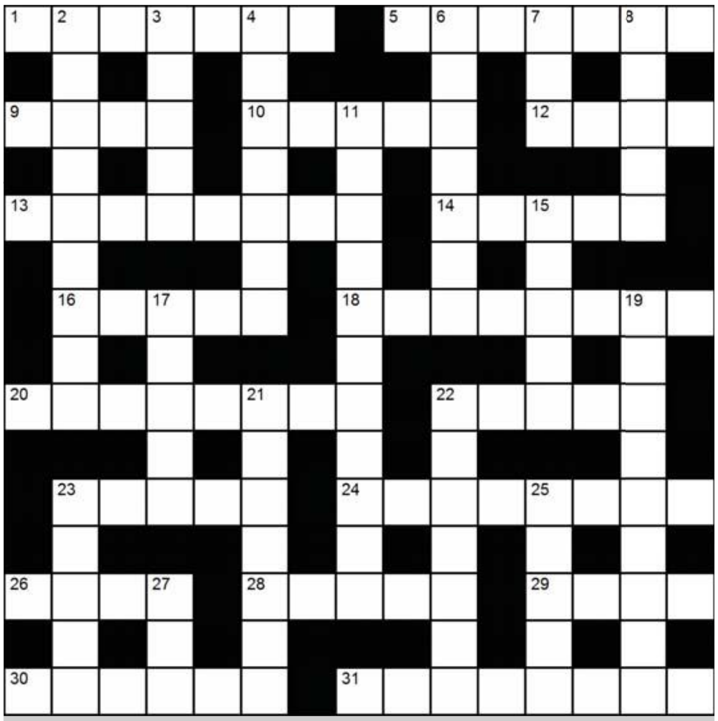
# CROSSWORD



## ACROSS

**1/26** Common name for agapanthus (7,4)

**5** Regal name of a toad lily with maroon-spotted white flowers (7)

**9/8 down** *Bergenia* named after this plantsman … produces rich items (4,5)

**10/17 down** A small rhododendron and German spa town (5-5)

**12** Name of melon with salmon-pink flesh – partly semi-rigid (4)

**13** Forget-me-not genus (8)

**14** Indian prince's yellow/maroon bi-coloured iris (5)

**16** Evergreen flowering shrubs: 'Pagei' is a low-growing form (5)

**18** Grape ____ or muscari (8)

**20** Hardy diascia with deep pink flowers – reverie (8)

**22** ___ lily, genus *Clivia*, popular houseplant from South Africa (5)

**23** A restorative eg or plants and gardeners! (5)

**24** Lilacs in grassy disorder (8)

**26** See 1 across

**28** Castle ditches … almost ruined when last of topsoil removed (5)

**29** Hard-necked garlic variety – spurned by Narcissus (4)

**30** Where roots and plant stems meet (6)

**31** Mark left by fallen piece of foliage (4,4)

## DOWN

**2** Genus of yellow-flowering spring shrubs – soft hairy sort! (9)

**3** Type of perpetually flowering carnations: 'Ancient South Americans' (5)

**4** Genus of the strawberry tree – somewhat dear, but useful (7)

**6** Genus of bergamot and bee balm – a random hot-potch (7)

**7** Regret a bitter-scented shrub with irritating sap (3)

**8** See 9 across

**11** Genus of tufted hair grass – Midas's peach, perhaps (11)

**15** A node – of a marijuana smoke? (5)

**17** See 10 across

**19** Perennial with a garlic smell … ruined a balti – ugh! (9)

**21** The 'pineapple lily' genus is found in EU co mistakenly (7)

**22** Smallest of the Greatorex-bred snowdrops – reproduced as resin (7)

**23** Shrub rose with almost-single white flowers – one making an effort (5)

**25** Turnips, according to the Scots, served with haggis (5)

**27** Evergreen tree, popular with topiarists (3)

**SOLUTIONS TO THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD WILL BE PRINTED NEXT MONTH**

**JANUARY 2018 SOLUTIONS**

**ACROSS 1** Snapdragon **9** Scales **10** Amorpha **11** Etna **12/7** Heart-leaf **13/27** Seed case **14** Larkspur **19** Aloes **21** Dartmoor **23** Acis **25** Roses **28** Perilla **30** Bamboo **31** Eden **32** Hollyhock.

**DOWN 2** Nicotiana **3** Polka **4** Rosehip **5** Ghana **6** Neottia **7** Lop **8** Agave **13** Strim **15** Knots **16/17** Red Arrow **18** Woodstock **20** Strulch **22** Rose bay **24** Cupid **26** Snail **27** Cameo **29** Run.

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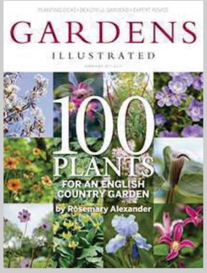

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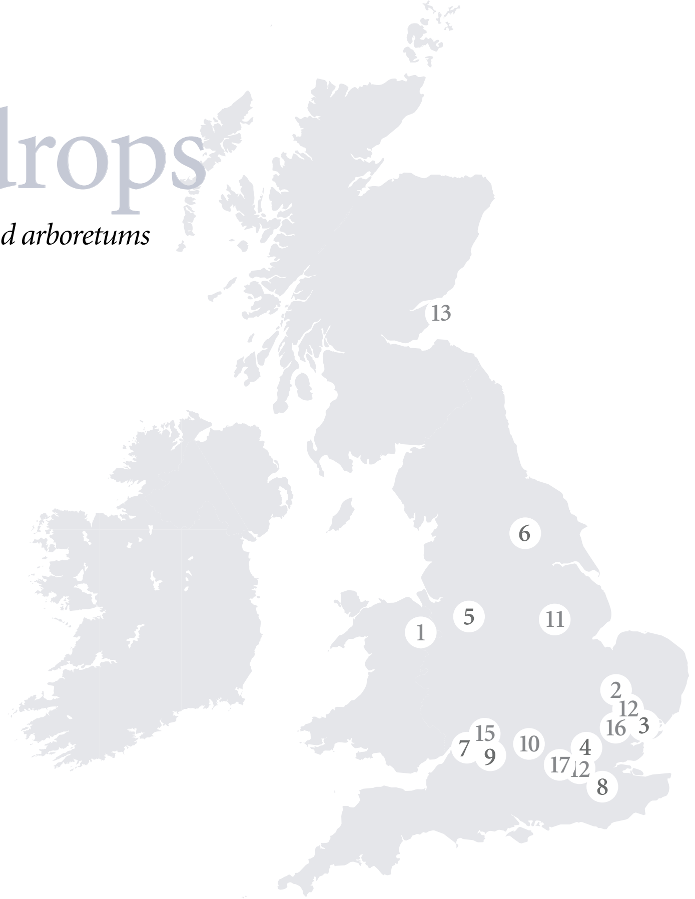
# Spectacular snowdrops

*Make time in the new year to visit this collection of stunning gardens and arboretums*



## 1 CHIRK CASTLE, NATIONAL TRUST

Chase away those winter blues with a walk around Chirk Castle's award-winning gardens and take in the carpet of delicate snowdrops in the Pleasure Ground. Warm your hands over the fire in the Woodsman's Hut, enjoy early spring bulbs throughout the gardens, explore the medieval tower or warm up in the 1920s splendour of the East Wing.

**chirkcastle@nationaltrust.org.uk | nationaltrust.org.uk/chirk-castle**

## 2 CHIPPENHAM PARK

More than 35 acres of spectacular woodland, lakes and formal gardens. A magnificent display of snowdrops, aconites and hellebores followed by vast numbers of daffodils and blossoms. Licensed tearoom with hot food and cakes. *£5 entry. Nr Newmarket, CB7 5PT. 10 February – 9 March & 17 – 30 March. 10am - 4pm*

**info@chippenhamparkevents.co.uk | 01638 721416**

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## 3 GREEN ISLAND GARDENS

Twenty acres of gardens within a natural woodland setting. The start of the year sees carpets of snowdrops, cyclamen and hellebores interspersed with a large collection of hamamelis, along with a huge variety of scented shrubs all at their best in January and February. Nursery and tearoom.

**greenislandgardens.co.uk | 01206 230455**

## 4 SNOWDROPS AT BENINGTON LORDSHIP GARDENS

Historic ruins serve as a spectacular backdrop to the stunning display of naturalised snowdrops at Benington Lordship. The walled garden will showcase the impressive collection of snowdrop varieties. *Snowdrops and hellebores for sale. Open daily 7 February – 4 March 2018, 12-4pm. Admission £5, children free.*

**beningtonlordship.co.uk | 01438 869668**

## 5 RODE HALL AND GARDENS

Experience one of the UK's finest Snowdrop Walks at Rode Hall and Gardens in Cheshire to mark the start of spring. A beautiful end-of-winter walk for all the family with a wonderfully diverse landscape and over 70 varieties of snowdrops. Homemade lunches and cream teas served in delightful tearooms.

**rodehall.co.uk | 01270 873237**

## 6 BENINGBROUGH HALL, GALLERY AND GARDENS

An impressive carpet of snowdrops lies along the ha-ha walk at Beningbrough's beautifully kept gardens. In 2016, 300,000 bulbs of snowdrops, crocuses and daffodils were planted creating a spectaclular sight in spring as the gardens awaken. The walk itself has fantastic views and passes by several of the estate's oldest trees.

**nationaltrust.org.uk/beningbrough** | **01904 472027**

## 7 COLESBOURNE GARDENS

Historic home of snowdrops started in the 1880s by plant collector Henry John Elwes FRS with *G. elwesii* and greatly enhanced in recent years. Ten acres with lakeside and woodland paths, 350 varieties. *Gates open 1pm. £8; children free, dogs welcome. Open Saturday and Sunday from 3 February until 4 March.*

**01242 870264** | **colesbournegardens.org.uk**

## 8 HEVER CASTLE AND GARDENS

Follow a snowdrop trail through the grounds of Hever Castle, once the home of Anne Boleyn, and enjoy the early blossoms of camellia and quince in the award-winning gardens. Meander along the paths for fabulous snowdrop displays and enjoy blankets of these delicate flowers alongside the double moat that surrounds the Castle.

**hevercastle.co.uk** | **01732 865224**

## 9 CERNEY HOUSE AND GARDENS

Cerney House Gardens is a romantic English garden for all seasons. There is a beautiful, secluded Victorian walled garden, which is filled with herbaceous borders and overflowing plants. We open our doors again at the end of January for the arrival of our fabulous winter display of snowdrops and hellebores.

**cerneygardens.com** | **01285 831300**

## 10 WATERPERRY GARDENS

Celebrate the first signs of spring with Snowdrop Weekends at Waterperry Gardens on 17-18 and 24-25 February. With more than 60 different varieties carpeting the ornamental gardens, enjoy these little heralds of spring in a magical setting. Free guided tours at 11am, 12.30pm and 2.30pm. Garden entrance fee applies.

**waterperrygardens.co.uk** | **01844 339226**

## 11 DODDINGTON HALL AND GARDENS

In the Wild Gardens, snowdrops are at the head of the Spring Bulb Pageant with drifts of bright pink *Cyclamen coum* and delicately coloured Crocus tommasinianus. On the Nature Trail, Cecily's Snowdrops enter their thirteenth winter, added by Claire Birch in memory of her grandmother. Gardens open Sundays from 11 February.

**doddingtonhall.com** | **01522 694308**

## 12 NATIONAL TRUST ICKWORTH

The first hints of spring are starting to emerge with a carpet of sensational snowdrops at Ickworth. Follow the paths where snowdrops are complemented by the golden glow of aconites. In February join us on a speciality walk and be led around the best areas on the estate and see our beautiful historic snowdrop bulbs.

**ickworth@nationaltrust.org.uk | 01284 735270**

## 13 CAMBO GARDENS

Home to the National Collection of snowdrops with over 300 varieties in winter gardens, walled garden and woodlands. Enjoy woodland walks to the sea, family trails and lots of Snowdrop Festival events. Stables Visitor Courtyard plant shop bursting with hellebores, specialist snowdrops and aconites. Open daily from 10am.

**keri@cambogardens.org.uk | 01333 451040**

## 14 CHELSEA PHYSIC GARDEN

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**chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk**

## 15 PAINSWICK ROCOCO GARDEN

Nestled in a hidden valley and famed for having one of the largest collections of naturalised snowdrops in the country. Each year around five million snowdrops bloom and there are 15 known varieties in the Garden. Throughout February the expert horticultural team will be giving a daily talk about the snowdrops.

**rococogarden.org.uk | 01452 813204**

## 16 HEDINGHAM CASTLE – SNOWDROP SUNDAYS

In February and March Hedingham Castle's grounds are blanketed with magnificent drifts of snowdrops, making the winter gardens possibly the most romantic in the East of England. Explore the woodland walk, the bog garden and the ornamental lake. Open 11, 18, 25 February and 4 March.

**hedinghamcastle.co.uk | 01787 460261**

## 17 NATIONAL TRUST CLIVEDEN

In the gloom of February, snowdrops are the little wonders of nature which can lift our spirits and help carry us through to spring. Snowdrops are one of the first signs of life in our gardens, despite the harsh winter frost that still lingers. There's a variety of winter walking routes taking you through these majestic pathways.

**nationaltrust.org.uk/cliveden | 01628 605069**

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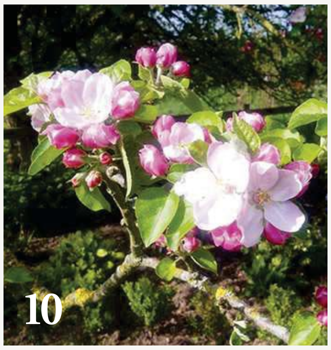
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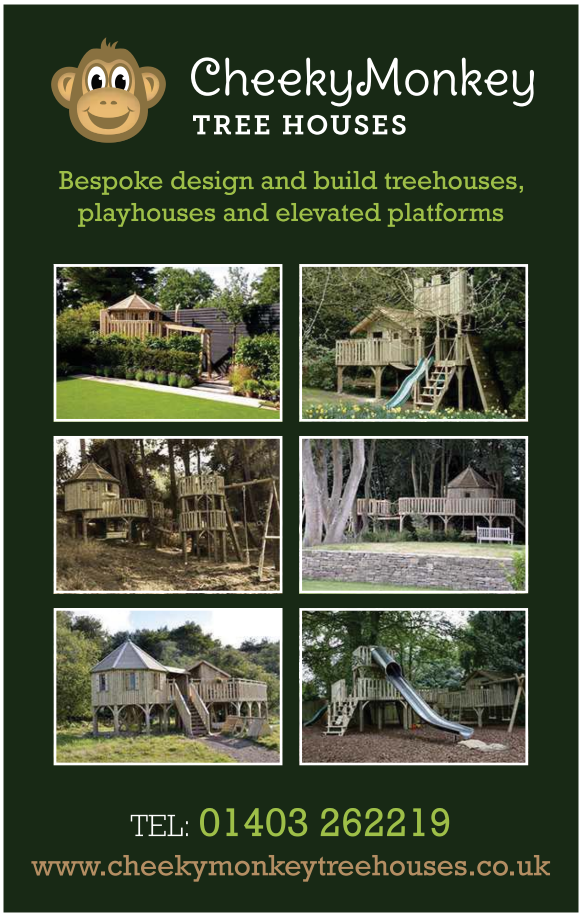

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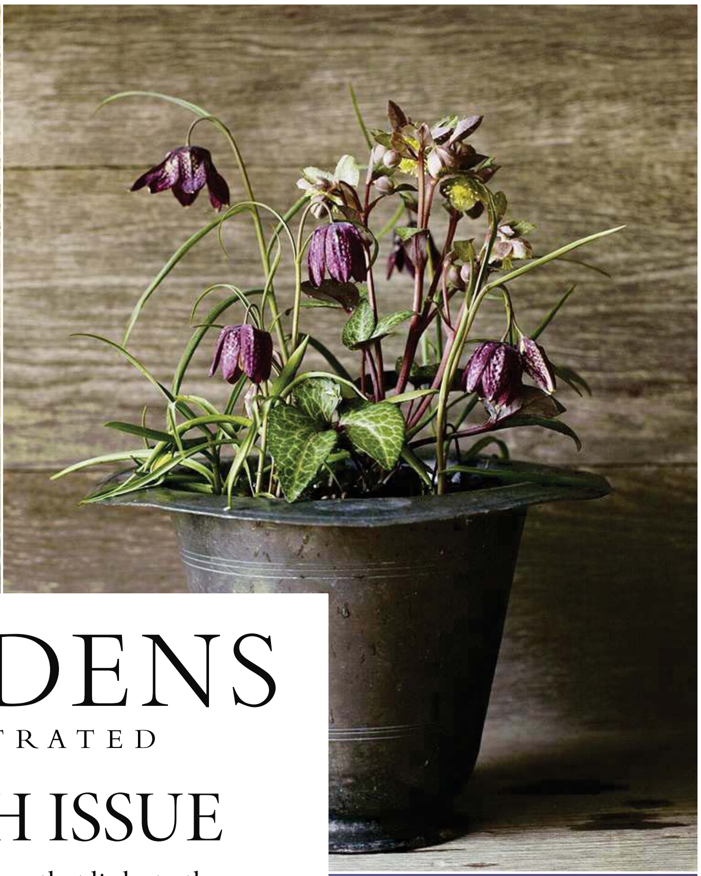

# GARDENS
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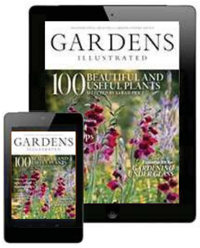
## MARCH ISSUE

- A fritillary meadow that links to the Worcestershire landscape
- New series: planting ideas for pots from Sissinghurst's head gardener
- Species spring bulbs in a plant collector's garden
- The best plants to grow this March

CLIVE NICHOLS, ANDREW MONTGOMERY, RICHARD BLOOM, MAAYKE DE RIDDER



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# TENDER LOVING CARE

*Even as winter prepares to loosen its grip, Frank finds himself worrying about the tender plants that might not survive its final blast*

WORDS **FRANK RONAN** ILLUSTRATION **RACHEL VICTORIA HILLIS**

ANY FOOL CAN GET A TENDER PLANT THROUGH THE FIRST HALF OF WINTER. IT IS THESE LAST DAYS THAT COUNT, WHEN YOU HAVE TO MANAGE THE SLOW AWAKENING

It is a dangerous time for the somnolent. Warm days and lengthening days will have them stirring in their stores and there will be a great temptation, after months of mean trickles that kept the soil just this side of dust, to give everything a good drenching. Leaves are crisp, stems are withered; tubers and rhizomes shrivel with every passable day. Those salvias look as though they are past saving, and some of them are, but the best chance of the survivors is that you keep your head well into March. We may be about to have our coldest weather.

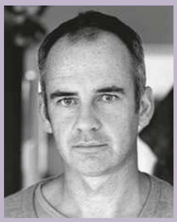
I freely admit, as an enthusiastic lover of the tender, that my overwintering skills could be improved. For the last few years I've been off the hook, able to blame my absence (in a frost-free climate, to add insult to immunity) for any fatality. Now I am back to having myself to blame, and the stalwart remnants weigh on my conscience. Any fool can get a tender plant through the first half of winter. That is when they are shutting down and conserving with unconsciousness. It is these last days that count, when you have to manage the slow awakening. If I can kill, with care, the things that survived my neglect, am I any kind of gardener at all?

What is there that has brazened out the exile? There is no aloe left out of a huge selection, not even the supposedly tough *A. polyphylla*. There are few stenches more distressing than that of a rotten aloe (the putrid core of a large agave, perhaps), and I have laid them all to compost, one by several. Pelargoniums have waltzed through the wilderness years undiminished. They are the cockroaches of the tender plant world. Aeoniums have a lovely knack of dying from the neck down, but leaving microcephalous rosettes that can be coaxed into regeneration. Some cannas and some dahlias, in no particular pattern, have elected to stay this side of survival, just. There are opuntias that put a brave face on it to begin with but are now no more than hazardous waste.

No salvia chose life, but that was not a great surprise: in the cosseting days they were among the most temperamental, always succumbing to the lies of February: it was one of the great tasks of March to wrestle the emergency cases out of the clutches of Kharon, snipping in hopes of a green exposure beneath the blackened dust. And that was when I had a greenhouse, swathed in bubble-wrap and belted and braced by several frost-watch heaters. Thinking about it now, that greenhouse was so crowded that only the rotting microbes could survive. Had I been less greedy and had given the few plants that really counted more air, the result might have been improved.

Now there is only a corner of the boot room, where dahlias and cannas are stacked in their pots; various windowsills where odd things have strange tenancies, and a glazed porch on the front of the house where one of each of the favourite pelargoniums has a guaranteed slot. I should be happy with that. I am trying to be less intensive, but the lure of an old addiction is a sweet song. My friend Kate has just moved to a place down the road, with outbuildings that are more than her poultry ambitions can exploit. She had made shelters for the tender, with proper, grown-up, air-circulating heaters that look like jet engines and is happily overwintering salvias beneath, elbows not touching at all. I am jealous.

How nice it is to have something to worry about that is not in the gift of a demagogue or an official or a deity; that is not a matter of life or death to people you should care about more. How soothing to be kept awake at night by the survival of a tender rarity you could replace with a manageable effort. How good is it to be watchful again. □



**Frank Ronan** is a novelist who lives and gardens in Worcestershire.

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